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SOCCER

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NSL SPONSOR LOOMING

SKY HIGH FOR KINGZ

By John Economos

The Auckland Kingz are expected to announced a much awaited move to privatisation which should substantially reduce their current financial problems.

The identity of the major shareholder is believed to be Sky Channel in New Zealand.

It is believed that the stake holding is in the vicinity of 80 percent.

Full Report Page 2

CORPORATE GROUP TO COME ON BOARD

By John Economos

THE NATIONAL SOCCER LEAGUE is understood to soon be in an enviable position to make a special announcement and release the identity of an overseas Corporate group as the League's latest major sponsor.

ABSW's attempts to make contact with the League's General manager Stefan Kamasz, confirming the pending major sponsorship deal, failed.

However, ABSW having monitored the situation slowly but surely developing over the past 10 or so weeks, is prepared to disclose only the following to its readers:

a) The foreign based 'mystery Corporate' major sponsor, has its shares listed on the Australian Stock Exchange, currently offering excellent value plus growth at its historically low levels of around the $2:80c mark as of yesterday (Monday). The shares which have been as high as $4:18c, generate a12.5c dividend.

b) The subject Company is a New Zealand based global giant Group.

c) The Company's Chief Executive Officer is a high powered and high profiled Australian, who also happened to be a former Director of an NSL club.

d) When officially announced, the major sponsors deal for the League, will have a cash component of around the lion's share of the $1 million mark plus services per year, an arrangement expected to spread over two years with an option attached to extend the sponsorship.

e) The Kiwi Company already has an exclusive sponsoring involvement with Sydney's brand new Olympic Stadium.

f) The New Zealand group has major, and long established well known Australian brands on our domestic, as well as the overseas export markets.

Mobile phone giants Ericsson, the League's previous major sponsor, after three years involvement with the League, pulled out its support at the end of last season.

This well anticipated, but most unsatisfactory situation, couldn't have struck the cash-strapped League at a worse period.

The NSL was left stranded and thus forced for the first time in its 23 year history, to start the current season without a major sponsor for the League.

That's all now expected to change very soon.

Stefan Kamasz: The League's General Manager.

The record sponsorship deal was engineered by a former Sydney television sports producer with the very valuable and capable assistance of a Commissioner on the Board of Soccer Australia.

The yet to be unveiled major sponsorship by the New Zealand Group is expected to inject into the League's coffers urgently needed liquidity, bringing froths of joy that's sure to leave all the NSL club officials hopping with happiness.

STANGE SACKED PAGE 3

WOLVES COACH TALKS TO ABSW PAGE 8

THE GOOD OIL ... PAGES 4-5

NICOLA BERTI COLOUR POSTER

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SKY HIGH FOR KINGZ

By John Economos.

THE AUCKLAND KINGZ, are expected to make a long awaited official announcement, (possibly this week), that will see their recently experienced financial problems come to an abrupt halt.

The finishing touches to the much mooted privatisation of the Kingz have now been completed.

The identity of the New Zealanders' mysterious 'White Knight', that has quietly, yet chivalrously, ridden straight into the Kingz's financially troubled stables, is expected to be disclosed as being Sky Channel in New Zealand.

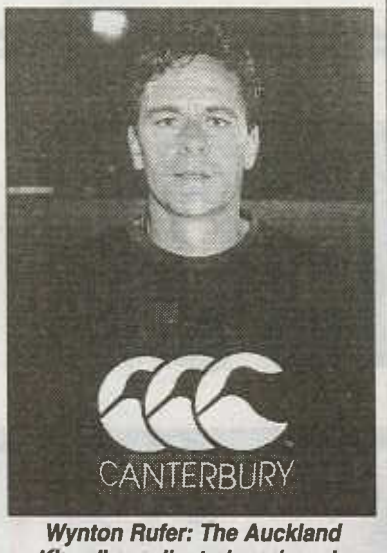
Sky Channel is believed to have already invested some substantial and immediate capital.

Sky who will become an 80% shareholder, has paid some $250,000 deposit into Soccer Australia's coffers recently as a bone fide prerequisite for the takeover of the League's latest fledgling club.

The soon to be disclosed takeover deal will instantly lift an enormous burden saddled on the shoulders of the Kingz's co-coaches, (both former New Zealand internationals), brothers Wynton and Shane Rufer.

A signed guarantee was requested by the Kingz's new owner that a full refund of such monies paid into Soccer Australia must be made should the Kingz suffer a short lived existence in the competition by not making the final cut of the already blue-printed and proposed new compact National League.

It's now expected that Soccer Australia will defer, (for at least another year), it's already announced intentions to reduce the League from the now16 member clubs down to just 12 teams.



Wynton Rufer: The Auckland Kingz" excellent player/coach.

☆ ☆ STOP PRESS ☆ ☆

FEDERAL COURT ACTION AGAINST NORTHERN SPIRIT

The Australian Professional Footballers' Association (PFA) issued Federal Court proceedings against the Northern Spirit Football Club over the dismissal of senior players Robert Enes and Anthony Perinich.

PFA Chief Executive, Brendan Schwab said the action came about when the two players were sacked by Spirit Chairman, Mr Remo Nogarotto, after they made the PFA aware of the club's non-payment of superannuation, medical expenses and other entitlements.

"Our advice is that the actions of Mr Nogarotto and Spirit not only terminated the employment of the players but also breached the Freedom of Association provisions of the workplace Relations Act," Mr Schwab said.

"We'll be seeking urgent relief so that both players can resume their careers with other clubs."

Maurice Blackburn Cashman partner, Josh Bornstein, who successfully represented the maritime Union of Australia in the waterfront dispute, will head the PFA's legal team. Mr Bornstein is also currently acting for unions in the BHP dispute.

"We'll be relying on the same principles as those used in the waterfront dispute, but this will be the first time they've been tested in Australian professional sport," Mr Bornstein said.

Robert Enes.

"This case is a strong one of principle for Robert and Tony, but it's also about the future of professional soccer in Australia. You can't have a professional competition if clubs like Northern Spirit take exception to players basic entitlements like superannuation that other Australians take for granted," Mr Schwab said.

Mr Schwab and a number of current senior National Soccer League players will announce details of the PFA's legal case at 11.00am tomorrow, Tuesday, 22 February at the Sydney Cricket Ground, Level 2 Dining Room, MA Noble Stand. Enter via Venue Services on Driver Avenue.

For further information contact Michael Kelly at Sirius Public Relations on 02 9966 4220 or 0417 279 442.

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AUSTRALIAN SQUAD TO PLAY HUNGARY

Australian soccer coach Frank Farina has named Manchester United goalkeeper Mark Bosnich and Leeds star Harry Kewell in the Socceroos squad for a friendly against Hungary in Budapest on Thursday morning (24/2/00) our time. Farina has also chosen Celtic's Mark Viduka and Rangers pair Tony Vidmar and Craig Moore.

The three Scotland-based players are expected to be available but it is not clear whether Kewell or Bosnich will be cleared by their respective clubs. Leeds officials have revealed that Kewell has an ankle injury and is doubtful for the trip to Budapest.

THE SQUAD

NAME	POSITION	CLUB
BOSNICH Mark	Goalkeeper	Manchester United (England)
KALAC Zelijko	Goalkeeper	Roda JC (Holland)
LAYBUTT Stephen	Defender	Parramatta Power (Australia)
LAZARIDIS Stan	Defender	Birmingham City (England)
MOORE Craig	Defender	Rangers (Scotland)
MURPHY Shaun	Defender	Sheffield United (England)
NEILL Lucas	Defender	Millwall (England)
VIDMAR Tony	Defender	Rangers (Scotland)
CORICA Steve	Midfielder	Wolverhampton Wanderers (England)
FOSTER Craig	Midfielder	Crystal Palace (England)
JOHNSON Richard	Midfielder	Watford (England)
OKON Paul	Midfielder	Fiorentina (Italy)
SKOKO Josip	Midfielder	Genk (Belgium)
TIATTO Danny	Midfielder	1860 Munich (Germany)
KEWELL Harry	Striker	Leeds United (England)
VIDUKA Mark	Striker	Celtic (Scotland)

FEDERATION CUP MONARO TUMBLE

By Graham Cooke

ACT premiers Monaro took a painful tumble at the first hurdle of the 2000 campaign when they lost their Federation Cup tie 4-1 to Gungahlin Juventus at Bruce Stadium on Sunday.

The result was especially sweet for Juventus coach Ian Heywood who built the Monaro team, but left after a dispute with the club half-way through last season.

He agreed terms with Juventus last October, but returned from a holiday in Britain to take charge just two weeks ago.

Juventus looked a metre faster than their opponent through most of the game, and Monaro did not help their cause when midfield play-maker John Rakic was sent off for a second bookable offence in the 35th minute.

Then striker Steve Lazzari, Juventus' major summer signing from Weston Creek Royals, headed home a cross from his brother, Martin, on the stroke of half time.

The playing numbers were evened a minute after the interval when Matt Valeri was shown the red card for a bad tackle, but the score continued to widen with further goals from Steve Lazzari, George Cattinach and John Glass. Lazar Simeonov was Monaro's solitary goal-scorer.

Heywood said he was pleased with the way his team stuck to a game plan that involved closing down Monaro's talented midfield.

"We were a bit shaky at first, but once Monaro failed to get on top they started arguing and I knew they were in trouble," he said.

KRNCEVIC BACKS STANGE

By Vince Battiato

Marconi coach Eddie Krncevic is disappointed at the harsh treatment dealt out to Perth Glory coach Bernd Stange.

"I'm so disappointed," he said to ABSW.

"Bernd was a tremendous help to me when I started coaching in this country.

"He is going to be a tremendous loss not only to soccer in Perth but to soccer in this country as a whole."

Krncevic was a loss as to how the most successful coach in Perth's short history could be denied the chance to continue his good work in the coming years.

"We have so much more to learn from a coach like Bernd," he continued.

"If we (Australian soccer) lose him now it will be a tragic situation for the development of the game."

Eddie Krncevic: Backing Bernd.

Although disappointed, Krncevic was quick to wish Stange the very best for the future if Perth does not do an about face and re-instate him before season's end.

BERGERS ON THE NET

Heidelberg United Soccer Club has a web page up it can be located at www.heidelbergunitedsc.com.au

The Bergers innovativeness is showing the club's commitment to soccer and its push to progress forward into mainstream

Australia. The club is endevouring to correctthe wrongs of the past and encourge new support at the club.

For more information contact:
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STANGE STUNG BY SACKING

Glory days could be no more

By Richard Kreider

Perth Glory, in only its fourth year of operation, dropped its biggest bombshell to date last week when it announced their coach Bernd Stange, arguably one of the highest profiled coaches ever seen in the National Soccer League, will not be given an extension to his contract.

The former East German coach, who led the Glory side to their first finals campaign last season, maintained his composure at last week's press conference despite being disappointed with the shock decision.

"Mr Nick Tana, the chairman of Perth Glory, told me that he has decided that my contract which expires in June, will not be renewed," said Stange. "He has not given any reasons for his decision." The question of why, was put to Stange but he was at a loss to the committee's decision that was believed to have originally been in favour of retaining the likeable German's services until Tana influenced the other board members and shareholders to change their mind.

Tana controls 75 per cent of the Perth Glory franchise as well as the Chicken Treat franchise while Paul Afkos, the newly elected president of the Soccer Administration of WA, owns the remaining 25 per cent. Lawyer Tony de Francesco is the other board member.

Afkos said he will be considering leading a campaign to overthrow Tana's decision and offer Stange a further two-year extension.

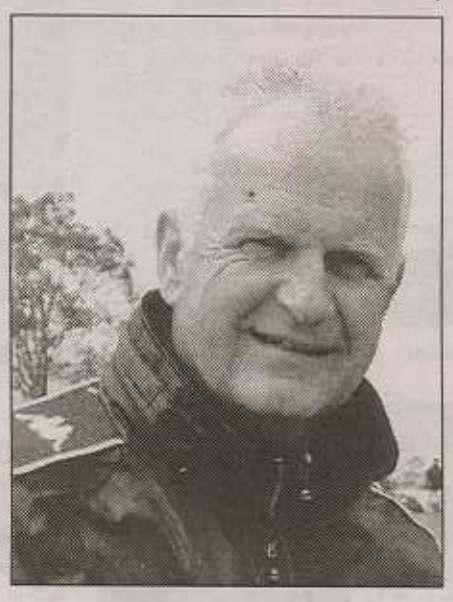
"The facts are very clear, I know what I have to do and I do it without any emotion because I am a professional soccer coach,"

said Stange who has already started making inroads into job-hunting elsewhere. "The season in Europe is closing in May, as well as other countries, and I now have to make some decisions about my future," he said.

The club win-loss record during Stange's reign which currently stands at 25 wins 12 draws and 11 losses, not including the four finals victories, is not the motive behind the decision.

"We did a good job over the last 18 months, one of the best performances in the country," he said.

His wit and charismatic presence has certainly been one of the success stories at the club since his arrival last season, especially with the media, fans, sponsors as well as other NSL coaches.



Bernd Stange: Thanks for coming.

The West Australian newspaper printed high impact stories on the front and back of last Thursday's edition as well as a full profile page within the sports section.

Glory's head office has also been inundated with telephone calls, letters, faxes and emails from people protesting the club's decision.

Tana says Stange has fulfilled the job he wanted him to do. He beleives it's time to move on and seek someone on a long term basis. That may be easier said than done if the club is searching for someone equally as talented and people friendly. It is not yet known whether Mich d'Avray, Stange's right-hand man, will put his hand up for the job when the dust settles.

The supporters themselves are not resting easy with the decision, The Shed Supporters Club in particular is preparing to express

their disappointment in a big way at next Sunday's home game against Canberra Cosmos. They were initially considering

invading the pitch at half-time in protest until the players intervened and advised against it since Soccer Australia can take the three points away from the game.

"So many times in my life I have had to say to some players 'your career is finished at the club' but now it is the same for me," said Stange who started to appear to be struggling to hold back some rare emotion when he made his final statement to the many media representatives that attended the conference. "I love Perth Glory and I love our wonderful fans and thanks very much for coming."

Trimmers to crack South's club record

By John Economos

Paul Trimboli, South Melbourne's fabulous player and captain, this Sunday in the battle against Marconi at the Bob Jane Stadium, is poised to break the record for most games played for South Melbourne.

Last Saturday against Jeff Hopkins' Gippsland Falcons, the little blond accountant, (to his credit), 'balanced' the Club's record of 338 matches against his account for Souths, the total previously set by former towering international stopper and past captain, the sterling Steve Blair.

Paul Trimboli: Set to bust club's record this Sunday.

As well, 'Trimmers' is just three goals short of the magic 100 goals in the NSL.

Only an elite four players have racked up the 'double' of having played 300 games plus scored 100 goals in the NSL.

The South Melbourne club this Sunday will be making a special presentation to Trimboli just before the game against Marconi kicks off at 5:00 pm at the Bob Jane Stadium.

Fly the Flag

Parramatta Power v Brisbane Strikers

Friday 25 February

at the 'Powerhouse' (Parramatta Stadium)

Youth League 5.30pm

NSL Match 7.30pm

Fly the Flag this Friday if you are a Power Fanatic!

New flag design available.

• Tickets available from all Ticketek outlets including Parramatta Leagues Club and at the ground

• $40 Family ticket available

• Free shuttle bus service from Parramatta Station from 5.30pm

PARRAMATTA POTESTAS PERMOTIO POWER S.C.

POWER Credit Union

Principle Corporate Partner

The Good Oil ... The Good Oil ...

By John Economos

A GORGEOUS Public Relations young lady of a prominent NSL club, and she's very new to the game, has got her teams mixed up in her delicious, absolutely adorable little head.

In a recent communique she sent out to the media, she included comments of just how her team was a most lucky winner over team 'X'.

But in fact it wasn't team 'X' that her club beat that night.

It was team 'Y'.

Ironically, for little 'Miss Dreamboat', her team did play team 'X' just last weekend, but her club Didn't win, but LOST to team 'X'.

'Good Oil' is most eagerly awaiting this week's communique from this gorgeous creature.

But really, who cares if she scrambles the teams.

The main thing is that she's a real knock out sort.

So ref.....play on.

●●●●

BERND STANGE, Perth Glory's former East German coach, will part company with the Club at the end of the season.

Stange came to Glory in 1998 on a one year contract plus an option.

The Glory was expected to make a decision at the end of the season on Stange's future, but the German last week expressed a deep desire for a commitment from the Club now, to enable him to plan his future.

But it appears that although Stange has been most successful, both on as well as off the pitch, a section of the Glory Board refused this early commitment. Sad indeed.

The share holding balance of power is held by the Glory's chairman, Nick Tana.

●●●●

A CATERER has taken an NSL club to court over some alleged $28,000 of monies owing to them.

No wonder the supply of refreshments for the attending media were in dearth supply last week.

●●●●

SBS-TV, the Super Soccer Channel will this Thursday morning bring into Australia the exclusive Live telecast of our national team's clash against Hungary, direct from Budapest.

Kyle Patterson: SBS Presenter.

Viewing times are as follows:

Victoria and NSW from 6am.

South Australia from 5.30am.

Queensland 5.00am.

Darwin 4.30am.

Perth 3.00am.

Hosting the programme will be SBS' Kyle Patterson with the Network's Soccer analyst Johnny Warren plus a special guest. SBS will also screen a full replay of this friendly international this Saturday at 5.30 pm throughout all centres.

●●●●

PAUL OKON, Australia's new skipper, has already made it clear that he will be in Budapest by tomorrow (Wednesday) to play against Hungary, despite having to break from the Australian squad last week in Chile during the Four Nations Tournament to quickly report back to his Italian club Fiorentina.

Paul Okon: Australia's captain will play against Hungary.

●●●●

The PARRAMATTA POWER tomorrow (Wednesday) will stage the Samuel Gilbert P S Coaching clinic between 10.40 am and 12.40 pm. Attending Power players will be stylish striker Mile Sterjovski and Australia's Under 17s captain and defender Mark Byrnes.

This Thursday the Power players will attend a lunch in the Church Street Mall, outside the Town Hall in Parramatta, between 12.30pm and 1.30pm.

Mark Byrnes: Tomorrow at coaching clinic.

Power players will be handing out autographs and free posters plus free tickets to this Friday night's home match against the Brisbane Strikers at the Parramatta Stadium.

●●●●

ALISTAIR EDWARDS, the Perth Glory's former international striker, last Friday night scored the Glory's second goal against Adelaide City at Hindmarsh Stadium.

It was the Glory's 100th goal scored under the regime of coach Bernd Stange.

The Glory this season has already scored 38 goals in 21 outings with still another 13 matches left to play.

Alistair Edwards: Glory's 100th goal under Bernd Stange.

●●●●

DAMIAN MORI, Adelaide City's international marksman, nailed his 135 goal in his NSL career last Friday night at the Hindmarsh Stadium against the Perth Glory.

Mori's goal, a penalty, lifted his tally to now be just two goals short of Rod Brown's all-time record in the National League of 137.

Damian Mori: Steaming after the NSL goalscoring record.

●●●●

GARETH NAVEN, racked up his 100th match in the NSL last Friday night against Adelaide City at the Hindmarsh Stadium.

Naven's night of glory was celebrated in fine style as the Glory's sweeper led his team to a very valuable 1-2 win over his former club.

Gareth Naven: Glory's captain now an NSL Centurion.

●●●●

ANTE JURIC, Sydney Olympic's lanky and stand-in captain, last Sunday night at Brandon Park against the Wollongong Wolves played his 100th match in the NSL, of which 88 have been with Olympic since first joining the Club back in 1994. The former Melbourne Knights central defender has also scored five goals for Olympic.

Ante Juric: Sydney Olympic's 'NSL Centurion'.

●●●●

PERTH GLORY after a special request received from the Melbourne Knights, has agreed to a switch forward of their away match originally scheduled for Sunday 19th March.

The game now will be played on Saturday 18th March with kick-off at 7.30pm in Melbourne.

Michael Reda: Knights star.

●●●●

TODD McMANUS, the Newcastle Breakers' efficient central defender, last Friday night stacked up his 100th match for the Club in the away game in Wellington against the Auckland Kingz.

Easily one of the League's most underrated central defenders, Todd is a very reliable and tight marker who has silently earned the supreme respect from all his team-mates.

Strikers shackled by McManus rarely get to hit the target.

Todd McManus: The Breakers' NSL 'Centurion'.

●●●●

JOHN KOSMINA, the Brisbane Strikers' coach and former Australian World Cup captain, last Friday night lashed out at many of the players playing in the National League today.

"Many players today have a hide in holding out their hands to be paid when they do very little for their clubs.

"I feel there is just too much money being paid to them and they don't want to really put in the hard work.

"You see it week after week the little effort being put in.

"I also believe that the quality is just not there.

"That's another reason why we shouldn't have a 16 team League.

"Maybe it's that we have 70 odd players now playing in Europe and that the quality left behind just isn't good enough to keep the standard up.

"I know that when I played, I wouldn't be putting my hand up to be paid if I played like so many do today."

Kosmina not only captained Australia during the early 80s but also had made the grade in England with Terry Neil's Arsenal first team.

But his stay at Highbury was short lived as he became home-sick for Australia's beaches.

A real brave fighter inside the box, Kosmina became the record goalscorer as he virtually carried Australia's whole attack on his back.

Always raw with honesty, Kosmina went on to add: "Also players today want to get involved in areas that they shouldn't, especially with the outbreaks to the media.

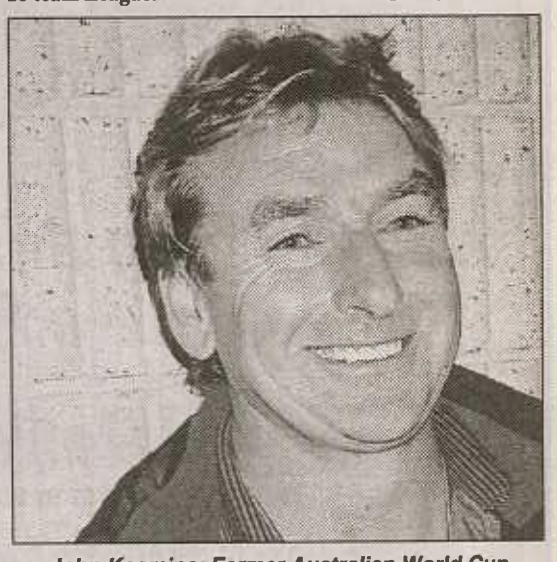
"Many give little to the clubs and want heaps back.

"I can honestly say that lack of effort really does not apply to any of my players at Brisbane."

●●●●

MARCONI STALLIONS who last Sunday night galloped back into the 'Top Six' aided by a solid 2-0 win over a defiant Sydney United, is expected to make a swoop in the transfer market and sign up two new players.

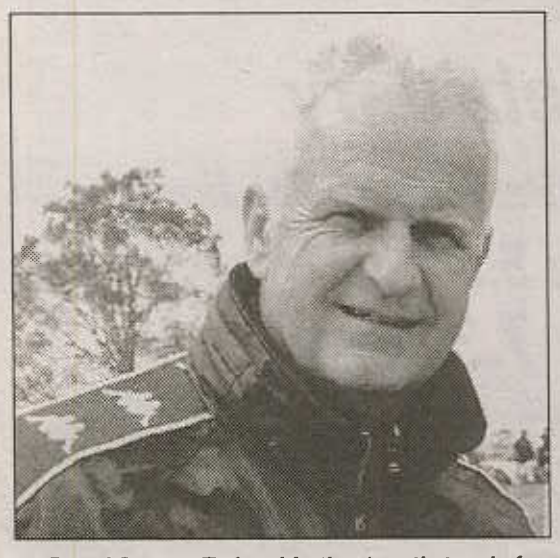
Eddie Krncevic: Marconi's coach in the market for two signings.



John Kosmina: Former Australian World Cup captain.

Security of the names of the two players being head-hunted by Marconi appears pretty air-tight for the moment.

Coach Eddie Krncevic in fact is playing a very straight bat and pad to everything

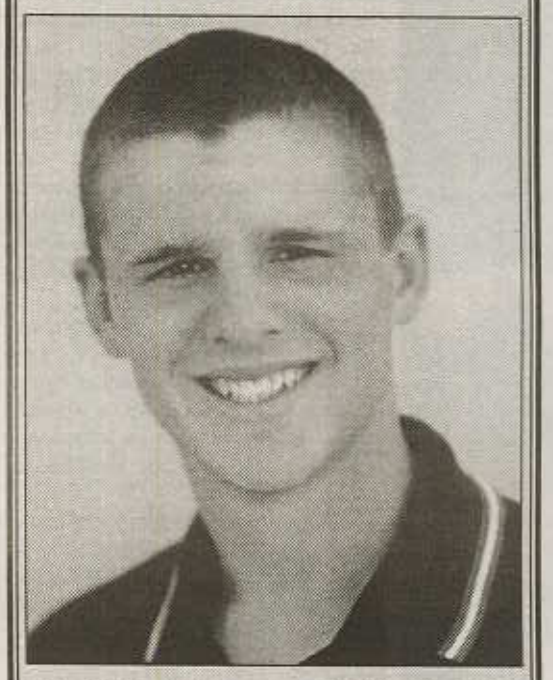


Bernd Stange: To head further 'west' at end of season.

OLYMPIC GAMES 2000 SQUAD MEMBER

Profile N° 146

JASON CULINA



Date Of Birth: 5th August, 1980.
Birthplace: Sydney.
Previous Clubs: Sydney United and Sydney Olympic.
Current Club: Ajax Amsterdam.
Current Position: Right midfielder.
Nickname: None.
Occupation: Full-time player.
Best Aspect Of Your Game: Ball control.
Most Difficult Opponent: Plenty of them
Most Impressive Local Player: Dean (My brother).
Favourite Overseas Player: Mark Viduka.
Favourite Overseas Club: Ajax.
What Qualities Make For A Good Coach: To understand and be able to converse with all his players.
Honours: Under 17s, U20s, Olympic squad, plus one match for the senior team vs USA.
Ambitions For 2000: To play as well as I can and improve.
Most Memorable Moment: Scoring my very first goal in the NSL against the Brisbane Strikers in the 1997 semi-final.
Most Regrettable Moment: None really.
Hobbies Outside Soccer: Golf.
Best Goal You've Seen Scored: Roberto Carlos' from the side line for Real Madrid.
Favourite Food: McDonalds.
Favourite Drink: Coke.
Car You Drive: None.
Favourite T.V. Show: World Soccer-SBS when in Australia.
T.V. Show You Refuse To Watch: None.
Favourite Movie: Escape To Victory (Pele and Stallone).
Favourite Actor-Actress: Adam Sandler, Michelle Pheiffer.
Preferred Music: Anything.
Least Preferred Music: Country and Western
Favourite Comedian: Nelson (Australia's gear-steward).
Pet Hates: People who show off.
Person You Would Like To Meet: Adam Sandler.

By John Economos

The Good Oil ...

By John Economos

Mike Smith: Marconi's durable defender-cum midfielder.

●●●●

MIKE SMITH, Marconi's durable defender-cum-midfielder, last Sunday night at the Marconi Stadium was selected by ABSW, as well as the Media, as being 'Man Of The Match' in the battle against Sydney United which saw Marconi run out 2-0 winners.

For his prize, the non-nonsense Smithy collected an expensive fashion leather jacket donated by a Marconi sponsor, Scundi Brothers.

The forever hard-toiling Smith had also won the 'Man Of The Match' award in Marconi's previous home game, collecting the first of his two leather jackets.

Ivan Petkovic: Sydney United's recently appointed coach.

Feeling Marconi's sweeper Buddy Farah also had a great game last Sunday night, (which he did), and the fact that only last Saturday Farah became a dad for the first time as his partner Kelly presented him with a baby son to be named Bailey, the very thoughtful Smithy chose to hand over his second leather jacket to Farah.

Is Smith a class act with most thoughtful team-spirit, or what?

●●●●

SYDNEY UNITED this Thursday night play host to the touring Chinese First division side Shanghai Shen Hua.

The match to be played at

Eddy Bosnar: Guest player for Marconi in Italy.

the Sydney United Sports Centre is the reciprocal game to when Shanghai last August first hosted Sydney United then coached by David Ratcliffe during an international tournament.

Thursday night's game kicks off at 7 pm with admission charges $10:00 for adults and $5:00 for children and pensioners.

This Sunday United are at home to the Melbourne Knights when these two teams clash for the third time out of the scheduled four clashes for this season.

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MARCONI's Youth squad of 18, currently in Italy to once again participate in Europe's most prestigious 52nd Viareggio Tournament, will line -up tomorrow (Wednesday) local time, against its first opponent, SS Napoli.

No less than a record 40 teams from 12 nations have entered the Viareggio Tournament this year.

The Marconi Youth team, coached by former international defender Jean Paul De Marigny, has been bracketted in Group Four with Brazil's Campinas F.C., and two Italian sides S.S.Napoli and A.C. Perugia.

Making the trip to Viareggio as a special guest player is Sydney United's defender Eddy Bosnar.

●●●●

MICHAEL PETKOVIC, South Melbourne's international goalkeeper, currently living and training with French First division outfit Strasbourg, has been approached by the NSL's pacesetters Sydney Olympic.

The brilliant goalkeeper has been hindered in being registered by the French club as Souths are refusing to release him.

Despite being an out of contract player, according to Souths, he is still not a 'free agent'.

With Petkovic being under the age of 25, Souths apparently still have the right to place a compensation fee on their player's head.

Whilst this wrangle has been going on, Sydney Olympic's coach Branko Culina contacted Petkovic in France last week to sound out the quality custodian for his possible services at Olympic at least till the end of this season.

Last night Olympic's coach confessed to 'Good Oil' : "Look, of course we are interested in a quality 'keeper such as Michael.

"If he is available, and affordable, Sydney Olympic would very much like to have Michael.

"We have Jimmy Kourtis out with a broken bone in his foot that he sustained in our match against Sydney United and he's expected to be unavailable for another three or four weeks.

"It's not wise to be seriously challenging for the League championship with only one experienced

Michael Petkovic: Unlikely to sign for Sydney Olympic.

goalkeeper in George Bouhoutsos," said Culina.

Up till last night, Sydney Olympic had not heard back from Petkovic, prompting the Sydney side to cast an eye elsewhere for a quality custodian.

OLYMPIC GAMES 2000 SQUAD MEMBER

Profile N° 145

CLAYTON ZANE

Date Of Birth: 12th July, 1977.
Birthplace: Newcastle. NSW.
Previous Clubs: Adamstown, Newcastle Breakers, Northern Spirit.
Current Club: Molde. F.C.
Current Position: Central striker.
Nickname: 'Clacka'.
Occupation: Full-time player.
Best Aspect Of Your Game: Strength, holding up ball, work-rate.
Most Difficult Opponent: All of them.
Most Impressive Local Player: Matthew Langdon.
Favourite Overseas Player: Robbie Fowler.
Favourite Overseas Club: Liverpool F.C.
What Qualities Make For A Good Coach: Previously to have been a good player, plus managerial skills.
Honours: Under 20s, Olympic squad, Australia vs Manchester United series.
Ambitions For 2000: To be part of the final Australian Olympic squad.
Most Memorable Moment: Three match series vs Brazil and the Manchester United series.
Most Regrettable Moment: None really.
Hobbies Outside Soccer: Golf, beach, reading.
Best Goal You've Seen Scored: Van Basten's in the Euro '88 final.
Favourite Food: Seafood.
Favourite Drink: Apple Juice.
Car You Drive: None for the moment.
Favourite T.V. Show: Seinfeld.
T.V. Show You Refuse To Watch: Any cartoons.
Favourite Movie: Casino.
Favourite Actor: Robert De Niro
Preferred Music: Whitlams, You Am I.
Least Preferred Music: Dance, Heavy Metal.
Favourite Comedian: Roy Chubby Brown.
Pet Hates: Smoking, people with no sense of humour.
Person You Would Like To Meet: Michael Jordan.

By John Economos

JUNIORS LIVE THE DREAM IN VICTORIA

By Bert van bedaf

Melbourne has a new soccer academy in its northern suburbs giving young aspirants the chance of making the big league one day.

Junior soccer is thriving in Victoria, especially through the youth systems of the Victorian Soccer Federation at community and school levels, but also at Victorian Premier League and national league clubs, as well as in country areas.

At such established clubs as Green Gully, Fawkner or Bulleen, the numbers are overflowing — the trick is to keep the puberty blues, the girls and the beer at bay long enough to nurse the talented through the growing pains and into the early limelight.

The Victorian countryside is fertile ground for rearing promising soccer talent. In Warrnambool junior soccer is buzzing. Organiser Steve McDonald recently said, "We've got a junior competition for kids up to 16 years old.

We had about 90 kids last year. We got teams coming up from Melbourne (for clinics) and the response is just amazing. There were hundreds of kids taking part."

Victorian Institute of Sport junior Ibraim Ibraimi knows what it takes.

The 14-year-old plays with the VIS in his first season in the national youth league and is enjoying every kick of it.

"I enjoy winning, but I also enjoy training," the dedicated midfielder said.

The year-10 student trains four times a week with the VIS and twice a week with his State League club South Dandenong.

Ibraimi knows what it takes to get to the top, naming hard work, dedication and concentration as the vital ingredients.

Another example of youth success is Josh Kennedy, now 17, who was a runner-up with the Joeys against Brazil in the U17 World Cup last November and is well on the way of securing a regular spot in the first 11 of NSL club Carlton. His first couple of appearances looked very promising up front.

A former Wodonga junior, where Carlton maintains an excellent junior basin, Kennedy had stints at Victorian and Australian Institute(s) of Sport, which has included a National Youth League championship.

Already Kennedy has the road mapped before him. "I want to become a (regular) senior player and not one of the young players trying to get into a squad," Kennedy said. His ultimate ambition, of course, is to score a club overseas.

Now another academy has been added in Victoria to the rising number of schools of soccer enticing talent to excell at the world game, so that one day they may live the dream and find themselves starring in the National Soccer League or on the famous grounds in Europe.

It has happened to Mark Bosnich (Manchester United) Paul Okon (Fiorentina), Mark Viduka (Celtic), Harry Kewell (Leeds) - key Socceroos and the super stars of Australian players in Europe.

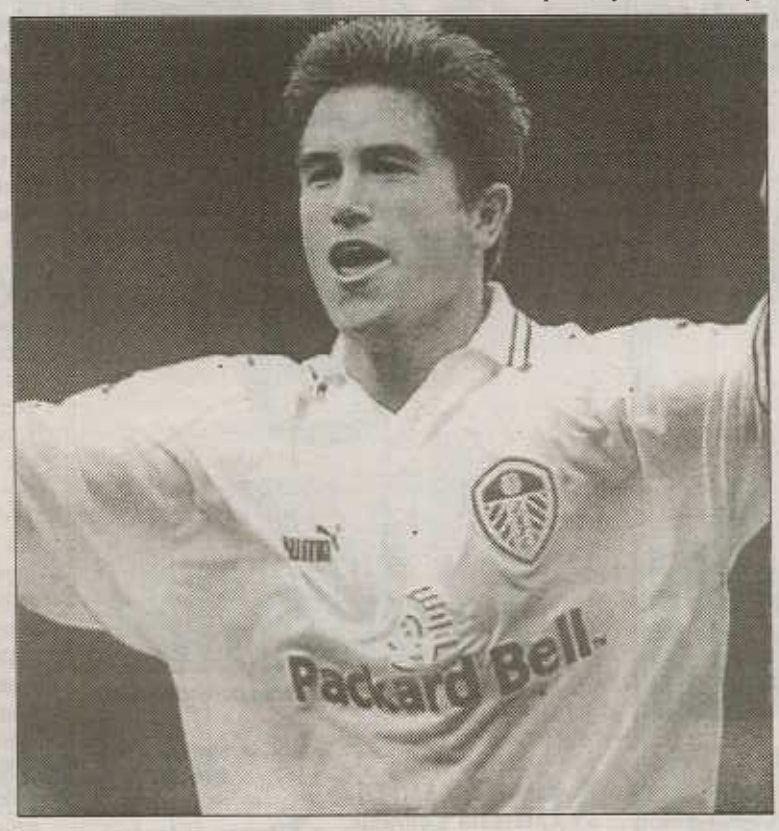
The Australian International Soccer Academy, based in the northern country-like shire of Whittlesea, wants to create a new generation of Australian soccer stars.

Managing director of the academy is Thomastown businessman Sam Cuteri, who is also president of the Whittlesea Stallions Football Club. (And not the Aussie Rules variety, but following the trend of the other soccer clubs, the term is boldly used in its rightful international (soccer) context).

The academy has connections with English Premier League club Aston Villa and first division club Birmingham City.

The Stallions were called Thomastown Regent Bulla, playing in the North-West section of division two of the Victorian State League. The newly formed club is expanding rapidly as the Stallions.

Recently, North Reservoir, playing in Victoria's lower leagues, has been absorbed into the Whittlesea Stallions. While the senior team has ceased to exist, the club's juniors have become the North Reservoir Stallions.



Harry Kewell: Product of an Australian youth program.

Under Cuteri, who resigned as president of Victorian Premier League club Melbourne Raiders before the start of season, the Regent club is undergoing major changes.

Cuteri's general manager at the Stallions and the academy is Fernando Dimasi, who left the Raiders together with Cuteri.

Phil Stubbins and John Taylor, who are well-known in Victorian coaching circles at club and school levels, are head coach and assistant respectively at the academy.

The Whittlesea Stallions will share one of the best Olympic training venues in Victoria, Epping stadium, with the Raiders.

The Stallions will play their home games at the stadium, which will serve as a focal point for the club and academy activities, Dimasi said.

The State League starts on March 24.

The umbrella body for all activities is Thomastown Regent Incorporated.

It incorporates the Whittlesea Stallions, the academy and the North Reservoir Stallions, including up to 200 juniors as well as women's soccer (the North Reservoir Mares perhaps?). The aim is to attract another 200 juniors within a year.

On the board of the incorporated body are Cuteri, managing director, Dimasi, general manager, Nick Soccio and Lou Marando, vice presidents, Frank Montegnese, secretary, and Lucas Chicivelli, treasurer.

The academy will be responsible for the running of the Whittlesea Stallions, with Stubbins and Taylor as coaches of the senior and reserves teams as well as U16 and U15 juniors.

Cuteri, who owns a local and lucrative chicken processing company, La Ionic Poultry, has taken a substantial investment in the venture, believed to be around $50,000. Other sponsors are being sought and Dimasi said they will be announced in coming weeks.

"The objective is to train young players in the right direction and give them the opportunity to get games with overseas academies in conjunction with our sister clubs Aston Villa and Birmingham in England," Dimasi said.

Cuteri said the Stallions club and the academy venture have offered him a new start after his bid to do a similar thing at the Melbourne Raiders failed.

"This is a fresh start and I have a lot of support," Cuteri said. "A lot of kids in the northern suburbs get left behind. But we can give young players a future. We can give them the opportunity to play professional football in the future in the NSL or in England," he said.

For details call Stubbins on 0419 307 380 or Dimasi on 0414 745 253.

FANS ASKED TO LIFT A HAND

By Bert van Bedaf

Melbourne Knights general manager Robert Hrzic has asked each and every Knights supporter to "stand up and be counted".

Soccer Australia's backdown on immediate reforms has given national league clubs a year's breathing space to get their house in order and clubs who were in danger of being axed next season are getting themselves organised for later, the Knights among them.

"Although Soccer Australia has indicated there may be a moratorium on the launch of the new league (confirmation is anticipated on February 25), the current Knights board acknowledges the club must expand its membership and supporter base to secure its position in any future competition," Hrzic wrote in the Knights match program.

"We must broaden our membership and supporter base," he said, citing the revival of AFL's Hawthorn Football Club, who more than doubled its membership when faced with either merging with the Melbourne FC or become extinct.

But with a dedicated team of volunteers, "who refused to let their club become a statistic", the Hawks turned their fortunes around and stayed in the competition under their own steam.

"Similarly, the Knights need to stand up and be counted," Hrzic said.

Marketing the club better is one of the key objectives and anyone interested in being part of the club's millennium strategy should contact Hrzic on 0411 125 112.

STH AUST. PREMIER LEAGUE

By Allan Crisp

Blue Eagles were the big winners from round one of South Australia's Premier League on Saturday.

The Blues not only posted the highest winning margin of the season pipe opener, but carved a slice of local history by christening their $2.5 million Marden headquarters.

Former Adelaide City and Wollongong Wolves utility player Michael Brooks flew high for the Eagles with a brace of goals, while other ex-NSL men, Corey Artone and John Cutillo of the Sharks were superb in support of the on fire Brooksie.

Port Lion Pirates won the grand final rematch over Cumberland 1-0, with Raiders, Croydon Kings and Modbury Jets other impressive winners.

Stephen Kidd, son of Elizabeth coach Alby, was City's goal grabber, but it was ex-Elizabeth shot stopper, Ben Moore who starred in goal for league newcomers Metro Stars.

Biralla were Raiders first victim, but Birks were unlucky to lose captain Greg Mills through an early foot injury, while English recruit Noel Clark found Adelaide's heat exhausting.

Birks also were unable to field their NSL pick John Fusco (Force) because his clearance from Soccer Australia was not processed in time.

SA Premier League Results

Port Lion Pirates 1 (D Harley), **Cumberland Foxes 0.** Best – Port Lion: B. Misailidis, D. Harley, F. Keegan; Cumberland: S. Savage, D. Gagiardi, P. Kouboulis.

Blue Eagles 4 (M. Brooks 2, F. Sergie, A Ferrante); Campbelltown **Red Devils 0.** Best - Blue Eagles: C. Artone, J. Cutillo, M. Brooks; Red Devils: A Allen, Daniel Menechella, L. Piscioneri.

Adelaide City 0, Modbury Jets 1 (S. Townley). Best – City: M Cartwright, K. Rees, J. Cecere; Modbury: J. Belfari, M. Yates, R. Marwe.

Birkalla 1 (D. McGregor, pen), **Raiders 4** (tog, T. Reeves, C. Georgiou, J. Bralic). Best – Birkalla; Wilkinson, Plummer, Fewster; Raiders: G. Haralabakis, T. Reeves, C. Georgiou.

Croydon Kings 1 (M. Pirone), **White City Woodville 0.** Best – Croydon: S. Barbaro, J. Porter, L. Parry; White City: R. Plunkett, S. Calibre, D. Stam.

Elizabeth City 1 (S. Kidd), **Metro Stars 1** (E. Perre). Best – Elizabeth: A. Westervelt, S. Pearce, M. Henry; Metro Stars: B. Moore, R. Moore, D. Sabatino.

SA State League Results

Enfield Falcons 1, Northern Demons 3; Port Pirie City 5, Salisbury United 0; Western Strikers 1, Noarlunga Bulldogs 3; Olympic FC 2, Adel Hills 1; Seaford 1, Cobras 3; Para Hills Knights 3, Panthers 1.

Round 2 – Premier League

Friday, Feb 25: Modbury v Birkalla (8pm).
Saturday, Feb 26: Campbelltown v Elizabeth, Cumberland v Blue Eaguels; White City v Port Lion; Raiders v Croydon Kings; Metro Stars v Adelaide City.

VIDUKA STAKES HIS SPOT AT CELTIC

By Bert van Bedaf

Margins between madness and genius are minute. One only has to look towards Paul Gascoigne, whose recent crude antics at Middlesborough will surely signal his demise.

Only look at Maradona whose drugs and other excesses have turned him into a caricature and landed him in the arms of "Papa" Fidel Castro at a Cuban rehabilitation centre — away from the sport of dreams that once made him great.

International football also once belonged to the working classes of the world, but in the last 30 years the pendulum has swung in favour of the moneyed class and increasingly global commercial interests, multinationals such as Philips Electronics, Coca-Cola and dreaded big brother, Rupert Murdoch's television interests.

Tribal anger at losing control of sport, club and livelihoods has led to hooliganism, which can only increase and spread as long as global powers exclude social justice and people's social and economic interests from their commercial agendas.

The so-called Bosman rule in Europe has given players much more individual rights to negotiate contracts by becoming free agents (Bosnich took advantage of it when transferring from Aston Villa to Manchester United). But by and large, the soccer sportsman — superstar or not — is treated as cattle in a feudal environment.

That's why the recent Mark Viduka experience is so remarkable.

Behind the usually normally composed exterior of the 24-year-old Viduka lies a volatile character, but anyone who's met the Australian striker respects his talent, honesty and commitment.

At Croatia Zagreb (now renamed Dinamo), Viduka also proved his worth and although the fans in the end turned against him, turning his last days in the Croatian capital into a "living hell", there's no doubt the Australian's abilities were also highly valued at the Balkan champion.

Viduka joined Celtic 14 months ago in an $8 million transfer, but cash wrangles promptly saw him sitting out a personal crisis in Melbourne for two months before returning to Glasgow.

A bizarre incident at Heathrow had him ordered off the plane, being refused to join the team in an Iberian winter break.

But once the sunny rays had alligned themselves, Viduka was able to rejoin the team in Glasgow and take to the field for his new club. He entered Parkhead to a standing ovation. Fans voted with rapturous applause.

His all-round popularity prompted Melbourne's Jock Stein supporters club to join fans at his former club the Melbourne Knights at Sunshine.

It's interesting Viduka's latest clash at Celtic emerged following an offensive remark by assistant coach Eric Black, who had called the V-Bomber "lazy" and "a cheat" at half time during the Glasgow club's 3-1 home loss to minor side Inverness Caledonian-Thistle in the Scottish Cup.

At the Knights in the national soccer league, Viduka had outlived his talent in Australia. A national league and youth player, Olyroo and Socceroo, there were no more mountains left to climb for Viduka Down Under.

Mark Viduka: Immense value to Celtic.

Scoring goals with supurb regularity on domestic grounds (becoming twice national top scorer, twice player of the year, and national champion) Viduka's prowess was so great he did appear to look "lazy" at times, mainly because he made scoring look so easy.

But sometimes what a player does may seem easy because he's so good at his craft. This exceptional cunning at being in the right place at the right time, seemingly scoring effortlessly may have worked to Viduka's disadvantage, whereas it should be regarded as one of his unique strengths.

True, Viduka is a classic striker and he may not cover as much ground as the modern game demands, but being top scorer in the Scottish League has given Celtic an ideal targetman, someone the fans appear to value and as it turned out, the club as well.

No sursrises then that Viduka did his stack, when being insulted, putting himself on the line as the green hoops got humiliatingly knocked out of the Scottish Cup.

The knives were out and the call went up for Viduka to be sacked, which at any club is the usual knee-jerk reaction when the train runs off the rails; shoot the signal man but not the station manager.

But in a sensational turned-about, Celtic sacked its entire coaching staff, head coach and manager John Barnes as well as assistants Black and Terry McDermott.

A "source close to the club" was quoted as saying, "It is clear the club has concluded Viduka is more important."

Kenny Dalglish, himself a Celtic legend and director of football operations at the club, has taken over as interim manager, endorsing Viduka's form and value to the club.

Australian newspapers were quick to note Viduka's remarkable victory, saying "Viduka 3 Celtic 0" in a Melbourne headline. And it's true.

For the gladiator to defy the emperor and survive is a rare event in football.

It underscores Viduka's worth, not only his admirable resilience. In the ruthless arena of world soccer, it also marks a vital win for the individual player and his ordinary rights in an extra-ordinary existence.

It makes the bun-fight at Northern Spirit over the rights of players Robbie Enes and Tony Perinich all the more significant.

SOUTH MELBOURNE V MARCONI

THE TRADITION CONTINUES

THIS SUNDAY 27th FEBRUARY, 2000

AT THE

BOB JANE STADIUM

KICK-OFF 5PM

MARCONI STALLIONS

Ange Postecoglou

Eddie Krncevic

"Watch Paul Trimboli play his 339th game for South Melbourne and break the Club's Game record."

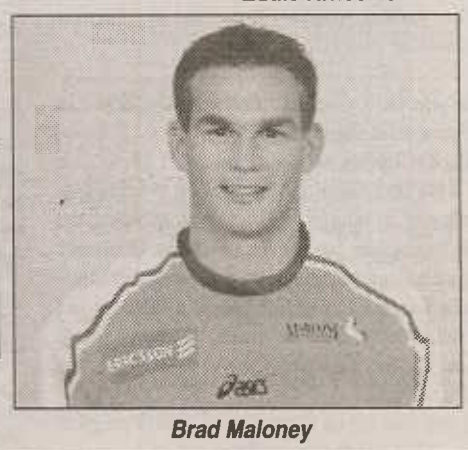
Paul Trimboli

DEFERRED MELBOURNE DERBY

WED 1ST MARCH, 2000. 7.30PM

SOUTH MELBOURNE vs CARLTON

"Look out Blues, revenge is on its way!"



Brad Maloney

Nick Strengthens Wolves' Bite

By Ken Kennedy*

Nick Theodorakopoulos is the Wollongong Wolves' Coach. He currently holds a Level 2 Accreditation and is currently completing Level 3.

Nick has had a good grounding in soccer, having played representative soccer for NSW Schoolboys and the Australian Schoolboys squad in 1981 and NSW/Australia Universities in 1985. Nick previously coached Canterbury Marrickville (1st Team Assistant coach 1994); Belmore (1st Team Coach 1995) and attained honours with Wollongong Wolves Waratah Cup Championships 1997 with the Wollongong Wolves being semi finalists in 1997/98.

Apart from his commitments with Wollongong Wolves, Nick is the Managing Director of a Travel Agency. His interests outside soccer are flying, making money and cricket. Oh and girls … he is married.

• ***Do you have a coaching philosophy?***

I have a method that I want my players to play and we work continuously at it, even to a stage where we sometimes feel a little bit bored, but a philosophy is a philosophy. Obviously you make some modifications sometimes to your ways of thinking but generally I'd like to believe that I am an attacking coach and I'd like to believe that my players show that on the weekends.

• ***What do you consider to be your strengths in coaching?***

Certainly offensive – tactically offensively, maybe I still have a lot to learn defensively. Actually not maybe, I really do. But at the same time you could use the saying "the best source of defence is offence" so I'm still trying to endorse that thought.

• ***What are your views on "Strength and Conditioning" at all levels of soccer?***

Critical. If you notice a lot of the English footballers, it is a prerequisite to have that pre-season. Not so much pre-season with the coach or the fitness trainers, but pre-season on your own because before you start your pre-season you should have some sort of conditioning already achieved.

I think that if you don't then obviously you start off on the back foot. We at Wollongong had a fitness coach by the name of Lauren Elms from Beaton Park Leisure Centre who did our pre-season and we had instructors for aerobics as well as weight training, so I think the boys have shown that their fitness levels are above average and it's because of that specialist training in the pre-season.

• ***What place does 'Skill Training' have in today's programs?***

You need a good mixture of both your physical as well as your skill training but at the same time it's all about the combination of both and confidence. If you don't go through both aspects of the game then your tactics both offensively and defensively are going to be found wanting sooner or later.

• ***What type of "Skill Training" do you do?***

We vary it, obviously we use certain methods of ball work. We also do a lot of 4 v 4, which we apply as a little bit of sharpness at the same time, but overall the players have the basic skill level. That's why we're here. What we are basically doing is massaging what they do best, what they know, and try to perfect it.

• ***Do you have a yearly "Periodisation Plan" in place? And what does it entail?***

I try, but I often vary it. You don't know as a coach what the following week is going to bring you. I'm referring to injuries; I'm referring to where the side let themselves down on the weekend. Obviously you can plan against opponents and know that down the track I've got to perform against a side that has quick defenders or poor defenders, so you've got to pick your strikers accordingly, and I guess it goes the same for defenders.

But you can set up some sort of fitness program over a three or four week period but you have to integrate that with your skills, as I said earlier, as well as your tactics depending on who you are going to play. Overall, sometimes the Periodisation Plan is hard to follow.

• ***Do you use game plans and patterns depending on who you are playing that week?***

Yes I do. My experience at this level has taught me not to over coach. I think that most players at this level in this country are very well equipped with the knowledge of how to attack.

Nick Theodorakopoulos: Absorbed by his passion.

The attacking skill that players have in the back of their mind in Australia is very sound, so I don't think as coaches that we really have to get in and over coach offensively. In saying that, I try to give players two or three different things to do during the course of the week for the upcoming game.

If you are going to move in every five seconds or so at training stop and start, I don't think that the players will respond to you and again if you over emphasise information, the players seem to drop off in their concentration levels. In other words, you don't have to over coach.

• ***How important is "Coaching the Player without the ball" in your view?***

This is very important … if players aren't consistently moving and creating space, then they are not serving any purpose because there are 22 players and how many times does a player have the ball during the course of a match. I can assure you not long, so he has to be able to be doing the other stuff. (Ken "SO HE HAS TO BE IN POSITION?") That's when team has possession with the ball, he's also got to be doing the defensive job when he doesn't have the ball. So constantly they are supposed to be active and concentrating.

• ***What type of drills do you use for coaching the "Player without the ball"?***

Communication is critical, when you are working on a full pitch, positioning. I was recently watching a training session in Europe and the coach took something like half an hour where he walked through, I mean literally walked through with his players, what he wanted done.

Maybe 30 minutes is a bit too much as far as I'm concerned, because as I said earlier, the concentration span of players I don't think lasts 30 minutes. I felt it was quite beneficial to stop and start and to basically go through – walking through things with your players on a full pitch. Then the hard stuff, to try to make them happen in training situations.

• ***What statistics do you collect from a game and how do you collect them?***

Very essential …. The first thing I look at is time in possession, because if you can starve the opposition side, obviously you are well on the way to achieving something. The law of averages doesn't allow the side that will hold the ball for 10 to 12 minutes a half will score many goals. So you might lose the odd game if you starve the opposition side but the majority of games you are going to win.

You have to look at the big picture and also we look at crosses that go in, crosses that are effective, and that means getting onto our players heads or getting first time shots in at the same time, how many crosses turn into goals. So your success rate varies depending on how good your players are. If you have average players then obviously you can't expect them to do much.

If you've got what you feel are quality players, then you expect your strikers to be finishing off crosses. The other interesting stat I look at is tackles and players that win tackles because you can have players that close down but don't get their feet into opposing ankles.

If you are not going to get into the tackles you are not going to win the ball. So I am always looking at players getting in and winning the tackles, which in turn after winning possession can be the start of another build up towards goal.

• ***What method do you use to give your players feed back on their game and performance?***

I try to communicate with my players regularly, obviously you can't all the time because they don't feel as you do every day, so you have to be on their same wavelength, then you just pick two or three every week. I continuously try to speak to players who are a little bit out of touch because you never know when you are going to need them. They often watch tapes of games which helps significantly.

• ***What type of qualities do you look for in a player when recruiting? Do you look for physical, mental or other qualities?***

No disrespect but I am not going to answer that because I have my own questions that I ask myself and I am just trying to keep it to myself, but good character off the Park.

• ***Each week, players are expected to play at their peak. How do you as a coach ensure this performance?***

Lack of alcohol … No alcohol … their life styles are very important, and as long as they maintain a high level of intensity of training and mix that with rest and relaxation, you have a good chance for them to perform.

• ***How important is the "Mental Aspect" of the player in achieving performance?***

Mental and confidence I guess are both fairly similar in what we need. The mental approach that I feel players should have week in and week out, is that they should have a point to prove.

If they don't have that sort of attitude, 'that I've got to prove a point again this week' … then I don't think they are going to be able to achieve something as a player, as well as you as a coach trying to extract something from a player.

As a coach … you control maybe 10-20 percent, you can't control more than that. If the player has the attitude that he is going to walk out with a point to prove … to himself, to maybe the crowd, to his coach or whatever, without putting too much pressure on himself, then I think you've got him in the right frame of mind.

• ***Do you feel that a "Sport Psychologist" could assist in the "Mental preparation" of a player at top level?***

That's uncharted waters for me … it's a very good question. I have to do a lot more research before I allow a sports psychologist in because I don't know how the players would respond … I really don't know. That's a very good question. Maybe a sports psychologist should work on coaches!

• ***What do you see as the 'Prime Denominator' for a coach at any level?***

Knowledge of the competition … knowledge of players … the hunger, the self desire to succeed and the passion for the game and a lot more that I can't think of right now.

• ***Have you any advice for coaches who wish to coach at the highest level?***

Don't!!! (laughing)

• ***How do you see soccer developing in Australia over the next five years?***

It's important that our senior team makes the World Cup 2002. I think that every one of us should be working towards that … irrespective to whether they agree with an appointment, a player being chosen etc.

For whatever reason, we should all be united in our quest to make the 2002 World Cup. Public awareness of our game is also important. Terry Venables may have not got the end result but he certainly put football on the map here. And no one can deny that the marketing that came with Terry Venables was immense, it was just magnificent, it's just a pity that we didn't make it to the next step.

I think that we can safely say that local talent in this country … we have the example of the Joeys in the final of the Youth World Cup … I think you will find we have the ability and the talent in this country, it's just a matter of channelling it through the right way to reach the top level.

I also believe that on a domestic front, we coaches should broaden our horizons and I think that Soccer Australia should identify six or seven or even eight coaches and possibly send them on courses overseas, … into other training camps with European clubs that we might set up relationships with, so the experience factor comes into play when they come back.

• ***Has there been any person who influenced you through your coaching development?***

Every one of the people that I have played under, every coach that I have spoken to about football in general … every one has something to offer, that is my philosophy. I don't think that everyone you may speak to, you would agree with … but you would learn something about his coaching tactics … you will always pick something up from everybody … and that's not only coaches but that's players as well who have subsequently been coached by others. I think that it is important that the information that you take in, is well and truly absorbed in your mind.

** The above interview with Nick Theodorakopoulos was first published in Soccer Coaching Scene Magazine, which is a bi-monthly publication distributed by subscription only. The editorial content in each edition is written by accredited, qualified Australian-based coaches and sports specialists.*

The aim of the magazine is to provide up-to-date information and techniques for coaches and players of all levels and allowing up and coming and current coaches to study the methods of experienced coaches who are coaching at a higher level.

To subscribe to the magazine, phone (02) 44 215 211 or 0412 736 118. Or visit the website www.shoalhaven.net.au/soccerscene/

BATTLING POLAK UNDER PRESSURE

By Graham Cooke

At the beginning of this season Canberra Cosmos coach Tom Sermanni felt confident he could rely on a midfield containing two players of quality in Jason Polak and Alex Castro.

That plan was shattered when Castro broke a leg four games into the campaign. The pressure shifted to Polak whose natural flair and ability to take the ball forward were stunted in a team which struggled to pick up points.

Now, with Castro on the verge of making a comeback, it is Polak who has suffered broken bones — in his wrist after falling awkwardly during the 0-0 draw with Brisbane Strikers on February 12.

Polak, who turned in one of his best performances of the season on his native soil, played on with strapping and it was only afterwards that the extent of the injury was realised.

While a broken wrist will not necessarily keep the midfielder off the pitch, the fear of further damage will add to Polak's pressures, while whatever cast he has to wear will be a hindrance to him in full flight.

Sermanni said he hoped Castro would return within a fortnight. "He is training hard and running without difficulty, but he tells me he still feels weak and I'm certainly not going to risk him until he says he is ready.

"It must be remembered that having the bone knit properly is only half the battle.

There is often quite a lengthy period when wasted muscle must be built up again."

Jason Polak: Broken wrist.

J-LEAGUE DIRECTOR RATES NORTH

By Graham Cooke

Tough Monaro defender Darryl North has what it takes to play in the J League, Consadole Sapporo operations director Satoshi Yamamoto believes.

His comments came after Sapporo, from the Japanese second division, had played a 3-3 draw with the Canberra Rockets, a team drawn from players in the ACT Premiership.

His reference to North came as a surprise. A steady, if occasionally rugged player in the local competition, North has never come into serious consideration for a higher level in Australia.

Satoshi Yamamoto: Rates Canberra boys highly.

But those who have followed his career know he is a good player to have in your team. Leaving aside his occasional brushes with on-field officialdom, he works hard, tackles harder and can often be relied on to come up with goals at crucial times — none more so than his 66th minute grand-final winner against Capital City Suns last season.

It is obvious Yamamoto believes North's uncompromising style would win him a place in a competition where his type of player is sought after.

The Sapporo official's other choice was North's Monaro team mate, midfielder John Rakic, who scored a clever goal from a free kick and has often been mentioned as possible National League material.

Sadly it is unlikely either will be getting offers of contracts any time soon — at least not from Sapporo. Yamamoto said the club had strong links with Brazil and preferred to take its allocation of overseas players from there.

WOLLONGONG NEWS

By Otto Bader

The Wolves fielded two new signings for the first time in Sydney's game against Olympic.

Starting for the Wollongong team were newcomers Dino Mennillo and Ben Baker as well as youngster Paul Reid, returning from injury lay-off. All played important roles in the Wolves performance holding the competition leader to a 2-2 draw on their own ground. Coach Nick Theodorakopoulos has a good squad of depth available, allowing him to rotate players if wanted and fill any position if required.

In the return match over the weekend the two sides played out another draw. Only this time it was 1-1.

■■■■

Wolves striker Stuart Young – experienced playing soccer on several continents, having had a taste of professional soccer in UK – has been appointed Media Officer for the club. His "golden tongue" will liaise with newspapers, TV and Radio, keeping the Wolves in the news hopefully.

■■■■

Stopper Robbie Stanton (27) – a 10 year NSL veteran – has reached a milestone, playing over 250 NSL games. He is in his third season with the Wolves.

■■■■

A former youth international, he had stints with Sydney United and Marconi before joining the Wollongong team. Consistent performances have made him a regular selection in the starting 11.

■■■■

A knee injury forced Kiwi international Neil Harlock to rest for some time – not caused while playing but an inflammation due to a cyst around the knee area. However, he is back in training now. The only other casualty for the club is General Manager Graeme Haney, still recovering from a dislocated elbow. However painful, it has not slowed him down.

■■■■

Kidsz.net – the Wolves major sponsor is great news for the children and parents, providing a subscription based internet that contains hundreds of thousands of entertaining and educational sites for kids aged 4-16 years which is free from all inappropriate content.

Kidz.net was born out of the desire for an internet system that would give parents the confidence to provide their children with all the benefits of the internet without any of the undesirable elements. Children are a big part of the Wolves with junior representative teams from U/11's to U/16's plus an U/16 women's team.

The club issued thousands of junior season passes to the Illawarra Junior Soccer Association which does show up in the huge number of youngsters at every home games lining up to chase the 'wolf' at the half time break.

■■■■

Illawarra Juniors – registrations in the past three weekends have shown an increase of youngsters with numbers expected to reach over 8000.

After the Third week clubs are still accepting registrations for vacancies in certain age groups – come in early and see your home club. Strong junior clubs like Albion Park junior soccer club expect over 500 players to take the field this year, Oak Flats are looking at around 400, Warilla Wanderers at about 250 while on the north side of town Balgownie will reach 500, Unanderra Hearts probably 400, Figtree 500, Woonona around 400, Helensburgh 400 with other soccer clubs to register between 200 and 300 youngsters.

This year's junior soccer gala day will be at Balgownie on Saturday 1/4/00 with competition proper to start on Saturday 8/4/00. Mums and Dads will be on full alert to transport their future stars to every corner of the South Coast.

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Please be advised that the 6 A-Side Men's 35+, 45+ & Women's 30+ Pool Competition will be held on 15-16 July with semi's & finals on 17-18 July. A presentation party will also be held on the 18th July 2000.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

BAITED ONCE MORE

Dear Sir,

I am afraid that the Editor has baited me into responding once again. If it is Vince Battiato that put's his two Bob's worth in at the bottom of each letter, then it's just your opinion against my opinion.

You may have some people who agree with you and some who don't.

I just happen to disagree with you and your handful of supporters, regarding the winners take all attitude in football at a domestic level.

Forget about the communist system and all that nonsence just mentioned at the bottom of my responce to the letter printed (Feb 15), what you are saying is that whoever fights Mike Tyson in the ring doesn't get paid if he loses, or the grand final team gets nothing if it loses against the other grand final side in the NSL.

It doesn't make sence, nor would it happen.

I have no problem with the national team bodies of any country accepting mega-millions of dollars from a World Cup finals or a Confederation Cup appearance for it usually goes towards helping the development of junior football and promoting the game at the levels of the game, both domestic and international.

But if you think that any single club deserves $4 million then eventually 10 or 12 million just because they happen to be the champions for that season, and television controls sport, then it will be a sad and sorry sight for soccer in future, especially here in Australia.

You only have to see what is going on in Europe to see that eventually a breakaway league will actually happen.

That's because a dozen or so clubs have become so rich and powerful over the past 30 years or so since TV has taken over all professional sport, that FIFA will be unable to prevent it from happening once the UEFA organisation gets on their side.

Is that what you want to happen here in Australia, with two or three clubs becoming rich and powerful so as to dominate the local scene for decades if not forever.

I suppose we could then join a super 12 throughout South East Asia, with only Perth, South Melbourne and the Northern Spirit from Australia. That's the best way for it to happen I suppose, without legal battles.

If that is what you want to happen within 10 years then your opinion is correct.

If not then let's agree to disagree.

Dominic Scullino,
Nerang. Qld.

Dominic, for the record it is me who writes the comments.

Now, this is not about the loser of the fight against Tyson getting squat! The grand final loser still makes money.

This whole saga is about the next level.

Example: Does Bradford City make any money everytime Man.United plays a Champions League game? NO OF COURSE NOT!!

United qualified and they, together with every other qualifier, makes the 'big money'. They don't share. They don't have too.

It is their right to be there.

I, just like you, want to see more money put into our game. But it should not be at the expense of the clubs who strive harder to be successful. That is Soccer Australia's job. They made a substantial amount of money from South's Brazilian adventure. But where is it going? Maybe you should ask them. - Ed.

KILLING THE GAME

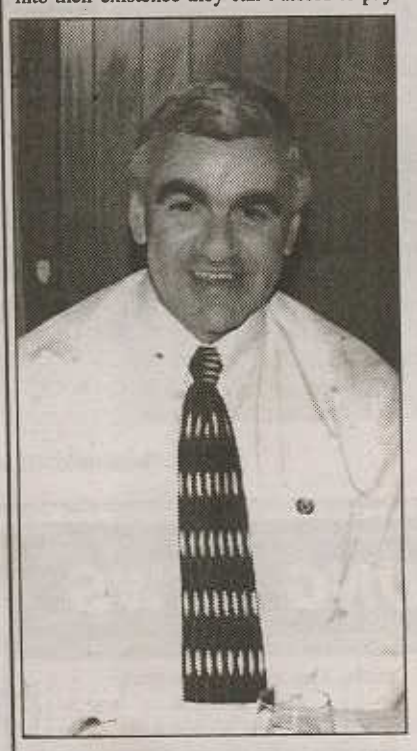
Dear Sir,

Lets go through some of Soccer Australia's recent achievements, so as to improve and expand the game in Australia.

* They did not release a fixture list for 1999/2000 season until about five weeks into the season commencing.

* Introduced two extra teams, Power, Kingz this season stating the two sides would attract between 15,000 to 20,000 supporters to their home games. Surprise, surprise. A recent Power home game attracted a grand total of 2,262 to the match.

* The Kingz's average home gate is under 4,000. The Kingz's were given their licence for five years, but only five months into their existence they can't afford to pay their players, and may disappear at the end of the season.



Basil Scarsella: Soccer Australia Chairman.

* The fiasco over Collingwood who didn't last the season. Carlton who made the Grand Final in their first year have never attracted many fans, and this year although in the top four, average home gate is under 3,000.

* Even the jewel in the crown, Perth, have seen their attendances drop to under 10,000 for their last two home games compared to an average last year of 15,000.

* We now hear clubs like Brisbane and Spirit have joined several other clubs in the NSL, struggling financially, with Brisbane in danger of going under at the end of the season.

* Selling the TV rights to seven long term for short term financial gain. Any clown could have told you, they would buy the rights just to bury the Soccer coverage.

* Now for the latest grand new scheme of two divisions, 22 teams, the country can't support 16 teams now, who will support the two divisions. Certainly not Soccer Australia.

What have SA done in recent years in marketing the game. A big fat zero! The organisation is in the red and can't even administer the game, let alone promote it.

Is is any wonder why crowds and interest in the NSL is at an all time low. Maybe it is time Scarsella and his mates give up trying to run the NSL into the ground. As we go into another new week we await for Soccer Australia's next brilliant contribution to killing the game at the National level.

Peter Bosi,
Athelstone, South. Aust.

Wow. A lot of mistakes hah.
Let's hope it stops soon. - Ed.

Send letters to

Australian and British Soccer Weekly
PO Box 155
Marrickville NSW 1475 or fax (02) 9550 9332
or e-mail to: soccerweekly@hotmail.com

S.T.A.N.D. UP

By Daniel Glorelando

For a network that has the rights to broadcast Australia's domestic soccer league, it is the view of many that Channel Seven's coverage of the number one sport in the world has been in the eyes of many non-existent.

No NSL matches broadcast on the network as well as a highlights show fans of the devoted soccer public around Australia are unable to see the highlights of their team's matches.

But there is a group of people Australia wide, who are set to confront the network to ask for a better coverage and in turn assist them to provide a better coverage.

The group simply known, as STAND (Seven Talks and Never Delivers) is ready to confront the network to highlight what is lacking in Seven's coverage of soccer.

Media manager Con Monteleone says that the group is not out for Channel Seven's blood, instead they are willing to help the network in exchange for the network giving fans what they want - coverage of the NSL.

"Most supporters were initially delighted by Seven winning the rights to soccer, but now many are dissipated," stated Monteleone.

"We are not critical of Seven but we hope the fans of Australia galvanise behind the issue."

"The current disappointment many supporters feel can be turned into a positive outcome for Seven should they take in our suggestions."

And Monteleone says the response in favour for the cause is large. On the network's web site, a Talking Point survey saw 87 of 100 responses referring to the network's lack of coverage.

And it is this support that has led the Group to organise rallies in Sydney, Melbourne and Perth on Saturday March 4 for all supporters, not just soccer, to demonstrate outside the network's headquarters in those states.

"Seven has a great history of sports telecasts but soccer is so far missing out"

"Seven's rights are for another eight years. We ask not of what Channel seven can do for us but ask what we can do for them to show that the supporters are behind the network."

"Soccer fans are the most fanatical around and if seven was to only realise this fact and they were to promote the game properly, they will have the loyalist supporters of any sport," concluded Monteleone.

KEEPING IT PEACEFUL

The following is a fax sent to the Melbourne Police dept as a courtesy warning that the demonstration exists.

It's good to see that attempts at a resolution can always be peaceful.

To Melbourne Police force 14.2.2000
Tel 9 247 6666 Fax 9247 5725
Special events Dept

As requested I am informing you of a demonstration to be held at Wells St Southbank on the Saturday 4th March at 3pm.

This demonstration is being called for to highlight the current inadequacies in the Seven Network's free to air coverage of Aussie Soccer.

This demonstration to the best of our efforts will be conducted in a peaceful manner and we will be providing a stage area and some entertainment for the expectant crowd.

I have enclosed along with this message a copy of the flier, which has been distributed to the public.

Should you have any queries you may contact me during business hours
Con Monteleone Tel 9745 2188 or mobile 0414 554329 Fax 9745 2399
or
Bill Atanasovski Tel 9464 3200 or mobile 0403 131 515
Thank you for your assistance. Con Monteleone.

NATIONAL SOCCER LEAGUE

AUCKLAND KINGZ 0
NEWCASTLE BREAKERS 1

By Greg Danvers

John Buonavoglia, in his 50th NSL match, was the player to have the first touch of the ball, in any soccer match, at the recently opened WestpacTrust Stadium in Wellington against the Auckland Football Kingz last Saturday afternoon.

And with a 1-0 win under their belts the Breakers celebrated long into the night completing a successful trip across the Tasman. A feat that not many NSL teams have been able to achieve.

After being dealt a cruel blow when dynamic central defender Glenn Moore was replaced, with a grade one hamstring injury, early in the match the Breakers recovered to out-last the Kingz.

The Breakers will be without Moore for at least three weeks.

On a surface similar to North Sydney Oval the Breakers players had trouble with their footing but once they adjusted their speed and guile came to the fore-front.

Vasko Trpcevski was thrown into the match replacing Moore and took up a commanding role in the centre of the midfield. Greg Owens went out to the right, Travis Dodd back to right back and skipper Shane Pryce to stopper.

With the first half midfield battle won by the Breakers the visitors began to dominate the match after the break.

Mark Wilson was the hero for Newcastle when he knocked in a Travis Dodd cross in the 67th minute. Kingz 'keeper Michael Utting had almost saved Wilson's shot but an out-stretched right foot finally putting away the loose ball.

Mark Wilson: Hero.

Newcastle's Todd McManus crawled out of his sick bed to play his 100th NSL match and joins current home-grown Breakers Shane Pryce, Glenn Sprodd and Andy Roberts in the Breakers centurion club.

"I've been in bed most of the day with the 'flu but it's great to get the win over here," McManus said at the end of the match.

"The goal wasn't pretty but we'll take it."

Coach Lee Sterrey was full of praise for his team given the poor conditions and the rock hard cricket pitch they were forced to play on in Wellington.

The original venue North Harbour Stadium was unavailable due to an open air opera concert later this week and Eden Park the venue for the New Zealand -v- Australia one day cricket match.

WestpacTrust Stadium was the venue for the washed out one day international on Thursday and had a cricket pitch right in the middle of the playing area.

"The right team won today," Sterrey quipped.

"I was very happy with our performance today given the condition of the ground.

"We lost a bit of shape early when Moorey (Glenn Moore) was replaced with a hamstring injury.

"I thought we could have been one up in the first half but we weren't.

"But we hung in and scored when the opportunity arose."

The win places the Breakers in a very solid position with 12rounds to go but no-one in the Breakers camp is getting too confident of a first ever finals series appearance.

"We have a tough job next week against Gippsland," Sterrey added.

On a bright note for the Auckland Football Kingz is a major cash injection expected in the near future from Sky Channel in New Zealand and an added bonus of their home matches to be televised. Sky Channel have reportedly taken up an 80-per-cent share in the Kingz.

Hard working General Manager John Batty is not sure of his position within the club.

"I'm not sure of what my situation will be," Batty said.

ADELAIDE CITY 1
PERTH GLORY 2

By Allan Crisp

"We are chasing a train that has left the station." That was Adelaide City coach Zoran Matic's terse, but accurate summation of the force's finals chances after this loss to certain finalists Perth Glory.

The Sandgropers retained Hindmarsh as their unbeaten happy hunting ground after hitting the front after a mere 19 seconds through sharp shooter Con Boutsianis.

Perth then charged to a 2-0 lead in the 19th minute when Alistair Edwards struck what proved to be the killer punch. The Whyalla-born player brought up a milestone with his strike bringing up the 100th goal netted under Bernd Stange's reign as coach.

Damian Mori brought his team and the 6,300 crowd to life when he converted a 75th minute penalty past former Adelaide City champion goalkeeper Jason Petkovic.

That breakthrough sparked a grandstand finish from the home side, but Glory stubbornly resisted several late attempts at a City equaliser.

The spot-kick was City's first penalty awarded this season and edged dashing Damian to 135 career goals, just two shy of Rod Brown's NSL record tally.

Referee Simon Micallef pointed to the spot after Boutsianis brought down Aurelio Vidmar in the box.

Matic rued the early goal, recalling two other such tardy mistakes that ultimately cost points this season. In contrast, Perth boss, Stange praised the fact that not one City player touched the ball before Boutsianis found the net after the lightning move.

"Our second goal was a breakaway and it's easy to play when you are two goals in front," Stange said.

"With 13 games to go, I intend to improve my team and I believe they have a big future without me."

That brief reference by Stange was a reminder of the turmoil earlier in the week that brought the end of the former East German national team coach's tenure as Glory coach.

"Yes, it was very quiet in the change rooms tonight," Stange said. But, there was no suggestion on the field that the coach's pending departure at the end of the season had sapped any desire from the Glory players.

Apart from the dismay at the loss, the Force now faces their next two games without the services of Italian import Claudio Pelosi.

The clever striker was yellow carded in the 51st minute for diving. A cruel decision which brings his second suspension of the campaign.

Pelosi's night of woes worsened seven minutes later when he was forced off the field suffering a head gash that required six stitches.

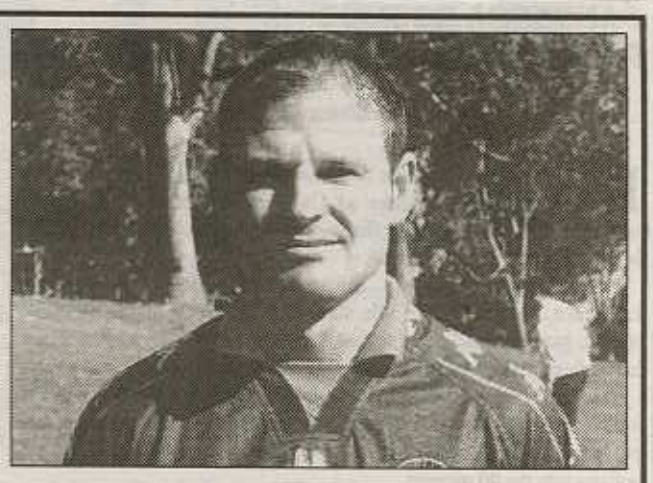
Perth also had its concerns with Scott Miller, who had been outstanding in the early stages, having to leave the arena five minutes before half time because of a back injury.

But, it was a night of glory for Perth captain Gareth Naven, who celebrated his 100th match in true leadership fashion.

The ex-City defender left nothing to chance in his key defensive role and he was well supported by Troy Halpin.

Perth's Brazilians, Aurelio (Schwertz) and Edgar Junior were prominent in a dominant first half, but both faded in the second stanza.

Matic strove to bridge the two-goal gap by replacing stopper Atila



Gareth Naven: Night of Glory.

Hornjik with midfielder Brad Hassell in the 33rd minute and relying on skipper Alex Tobin, Dong Ki Kim and Angelo Costanzo to hold the defensive fort.

The trio answered the challenge, but the risk involved brought chances and amazing misses from Aurelio in the 66th minute when he ballooned the ball over the vacant goal and provided another hair-raising moment seven minutes from full-time when Robert Trajkovski also spurned an open net.

The home fans rallied as Vidmar, Nick Sabljak and Mori went perilously close to earning a leveller as their shots missed by slender margins.

NORTHERN SPIRIT 1
BRISBANE STRIKERS 0

By Daniel Giorelando

A Paul Bilokapic goal 12 minutes into the second half was enough to give Northern Spirit a scrappy 1-0 win over the Brisbane Strikers at North Sydney Oval last Friday.

Following a week of turmoil at the Spirit involving players, officials and the Professional Football Association, the team put their problems aside to take a most valuable three points in the race for a top six spot.

On a night in which star Italian import Nicola Berti was expected to set the crowd of 10,438 alight, it was Bilokapic who ultimately inspired his team to a much needed win.

Bilokapic was the Spirit's most dangerous player on the night, coming close from free kicks on a number of occasions before ultimately scoring the winner.

A Robbie Slater cross from the left found Sean Cranney at the far post, who headed the ball back across goal where Bilokapic converted following a mistake by keeper Daniel Duke.

Duke, who was playing in place of Clint Bolton who is on Socceroo duty, got his hands to Sean Cranney's cross only to let the ball slip through his grasp, falling onto the head of Bilokapic who made no mistake.

Bilokapic then came close to extending the lead only eight minutes later through a free kick in the 65th minute as an in-swinging left-foot shot to the right post was somehow tapped around the post by Duke.

Spirit could count themselves unlucky not to have won the game by a bigger margin as substitute Simon Cantanzaro hit the right post from 20 metres out before Bilokapic almost scored from yet another free kick seven minutes from time.

The make up of the Spirit side for this clash suffered wholesale changes upon the return of coach Graham Arnold from Socceroo duties in Chile, including the introduction of debutant Paul Wearne and the re-inclusion of Paul Henderson in goals, forcing Arnold to adopt a new system.

"With a patched up side, I had to change our system because we have conceded too many goals," said Arnold.

The system which Arnold introduced against the Strikers, 4-4-2, worked wonders as Brisbane found it tough to break through a resilient defence.

"After watching the tape of Newcastle, I decided to put in Henderson. The reason why I went for a back four is because Hendo is so quick, he did a good job for us," said Arnold.

And what an inspired selection Henderson turned out to be, as he kept his side in the match, showing some of the form that made him a cult figure and a first team regular north of the Harbour last season.

However Henderson's first real piece of action almost turned to disaster early in the second half, as a dipping header by Peter Grierson was seemingly headed for the back of the net before the big outstretched arms of Henderson tipped the ball over the bar.

And in the 77th minute, Henderson kept his side's slender lead intact following a disastrous backpass by Wearne which almost let in Grierson.

Henderson showing the speed and agility which helped sway Arnold to select him ahead of this season's number one John Perosh, got to the ball only a matter of inches ahead of Grierson to clear any danger.

Arnold praised the workrate and effort of young Adam Griffiths, and Cantanzaro although the presence of Italian World Cup star Nicola Berti, who lasted 62 minutes, helped lift the Spirit, especially in the eyes of Arnold who was quite impressed with his effort.

Berti's involvement in the match was almost non-existent but a lack of fitness may be the reason for this, and with nine days rest from the Brisbane game and this weekend's clash, Berti is set to be a stronger and fitter man come Sunday.

However the inclusion of Berti went against the trend going into the match, with injuries plaguing both teams, forcing both coaches to field sides that were far from either club's strongest 11.

And due to this fact, the game was not one to remember but as Brisbane coach John Kosmina remarked disappointingly after the match, the scoreline was a bit harsh to his depleted side of young chargers.

"The game deserved a 0-0 scoreline, we conceded a very soft goal," said Kosmina.

Kosmina was disappointed with the way in which the goal was conceded, one which ultimately proved the difference between the two sides.

Kosmina said that the loss of a number of players, including Glen Gwynne had forced him to put together "a makeshift team."

Both coaches will be looking towards the return of key players, Brisbane welcoming back the services of keeper Clint Bolton upon his return from Socceroo duties in Chile with Spirit set to slot Luke Casserley into the starting line-up also upon his return from Socceroo duties.

NATIONAL SOCCER LEAGUE

GIPPSLAND FALCONS 0
SOUTH MELBOURNE 1

By Damian Tripodi

The Gippsland Falcons came so close and yet will have to wait another day to break the hoodoo against bogey side South Melbourne, as the Lakesiders scored a goal two minutes before full-time to go home victors in a game which was entertaining, full of action and with close shaves from both sides.

After having dominated the entire second half and almost scoring on several occasions, the Falcons suffered a heartbreaking goal, scored by South's Michael Curcija, with a header from a Robert Liparoti corner kick.

The Falcons have beaten South Melbourne in cup matches and practice games, but as yet have failed to register a NSL league win.

Both teams deserve the fullest praise for the level of commitment and high work rate in extremely hot weather conditions.

The game began with South Melbourne exerting pressure on the home side. The visitors were more cohesive and were creating more opportunities with a series of dangerous thrusts forward, resulting in several decisive shots at goal.

In the early stages the Falcons were trying to keep possession in midfield. But, although gutsy and hard working, were uncharacteristically unimpressive with their forward moves. They appeared to move the ball too quickly and communication whilst in possession was poor and often lost the ball before being able to create any worthwhile opportunity.

The first real scoring opportunity presented itself nine minutes into the match and it was South Melbourne's. George Goutzoulis cut a ball from the goal line towards Anastasiadis, who forced Gippsland keeper Bojo Jevdjevic into a full stretch save.

Curcija, with a 30-metre blast tested Jevdjevic again eight minutes later and Nick Orlic sent the ball wide soon after that with Goran Lozanovski's shot moments later, also going too high.

The home aside could only manage a few shots from long range.

Another chance went begging for the visitors at the 36th minute with Curcija again the protagonist. From close range, with Jevdjevic off his line, on an angle, he rolled the ball just wide of the far upright.

The first half ended with South Melbourne on top and with the Falcons, particularly the defence, worthy of praise for being able to keep the visitors scoreless.

The second half, however, was a totally different story. Obviously coach Jeff Hokins pepped up his charges, who came out all guns blazing.

For the next 20 minutes, Hopkins' men played some of the best football seen at Mobil Park. They peppered South's goal. Hit the bar, scraped the paint off the upright, kept South under constant pressure, forced keeper Chris Jones to execute some spectacular, acrobatic saves.

In short, the Falcons did everything but score a goal.

Three minutes into the half Igor Mandic, with a header found Brian Macnicol perfectly placed and with a header of his own to force Jones into a miraculous save.

Eight minutes later, Mandic dispossessed an opponent just inside the penalty box, turned and his powerful drive was taken by Jones.

In the next two minutes, Robbie Puca, on the turn delivered a great shot and Doug Marcina's powerful drive rebounded off the horizontal bar.

South Melbourne coach Ange Postecoglou in an obvious attempt to stop the Falcons' fury, brought on the fresh legs of Clarkson and Coveny, with the latter soon making his presence felt with a powerful header at goal.

Substitute Juan Nilo broke through two defenders at the eight minute and his shot scraped the near post on its way out.

Just as it appeared that neither side could break the deadlock, Curcija's goal in the dying minutes allowed the visitors to return to Melbourne blazing in glory.

Michael Curcija: Late winner

At the post match press conference, Falcons coach Jeff Hopkins praised his players for their effort.

"I, like the rest of the team do not like to lose, however, I am proud of the players and everything they did. We weren't far away at getting a win against a great side and the way we played in the second half we proved that we are not far behind the best," stated Hopkins.

South Melbourne coach Ange Postecoglou declared that he was very happy to get the three points.

"It is a difficult place to get three points. It was a good game with both teams working hard. It was a goal that had to go in. We couldn't afford to lose three points. To score a late goal gives players some sense of belief. In the second half, they (Gippsland) put some pressure on us," stated the coach.

CANBERRA COSMOS 1
PARRAMATTA POWER 0

By Graham Cooke

For more than 18 months Andrew Clark has sat, miserable and alone, on the sidelines at Canberra Cosmos - at times contemplating what seemed the inevitability of never playing again in the National Soccer League.

A recurring groin injury, followed by problems with gaining insurance, have kept him idle since the early part of the 1998-99 season, but on Friday night against Parramatta Power he was back and answering the pessimists who had long ago written him off.

It would be an exaggeration to say he played a starring role in the 1-0 win - Canberra's first at home since November 15 - but in an all-action performance, it seemed he was trying to cram a season-and-a-half of activity into the 90 minutes.

Coach Tom Sermanni said afterwards he had been pleased to see how well Clark lasted. "I had a substitute all warmed up and ready to replace him, but he got his second wind and I didn't see the need to make a change," Sermanni said.

"He looked a bit rusty at times, which is to be expected, but I thought his involvement in the game and the amount of ground he covered was outstanding."

Maybe it was that rustiness which denied Clark the fairytale return of a goal. Twice he found himself with the ball at his feet and staring at veteran goalkeeper Mike Gibson. In the 14th minute Gibson did everything right, spreading himself and getting his body in the way of the shot which was deflected for a corner.

The re-run came late in the game when Ivo de Jesus beat the offside trap before passing inside to Clark, who was better positioned for a shot.

David Mitchell: "We didn't deserve to win."

This time the midfielder struck the ball well over the bar.

Parramatta had its moments, notably in the first half when Cosmos goalkeeper Grant Barlow somehow got his hands up to a stinging snap shot from John Gibson. The drive was too hot to handle first time, but having deflected the ball high into the air, Barlow was able to get underneath and complete the save.

But in the end it was a goal from youngster David Arranz after just 100 seconds that was the difference between the two sides.

The move began unpromisingly with de Jesus slicing a free kick harmlessly into a mass of Parramatta players.

Strangely the defence seemed incapable of making a clean clearance as Paul Roberts muscled in to challenge. Instead the ball bobbled loose to Harry James on the left, whose cross found Arranz ready, unmarked and waiting, a mere couple of metres out from the goal line.

It is the first time in the Cosmos's history they have done the double over an opponent in the same season - Parramatta were beaten 3-2 in Sydney in October - but Sermanni said he was unaware of the statistic.

"I'm just happy to have three points and to have kept a clean sheet," he said.

Power team boss David Mitchell said his side's quest for a top-four spot will be all the more harder following this reverse.

"It was always going to be difficult after we lost that early goal," he said. "The Cosmos were a very committed side. We didn't deserve to win tonight."

WOLLONGONG WOLVES 1
SYDNEY OLYMPIC 1

By Otto Bader

At Brandon Park in front of the best crowd of the season — 7,351 official plus hundreds of kids and parents — the game developed into an epic battle.

The first half was dominated by the home team with chances begging and only one converted with a brilliant chip over the advancing goalkeeper's head from Wolves midfield player Dino Mennillo in the 35th minute.

Despite what Olympic coach Branco Culina said in the press conference the goal was expertly taken, he said it was a gift and the keeper had no right to come out that far. However, the pass came from Stuart Young who spotted his player pushing forward in found Mennillo with a well timed ball and the skill of Mennillo resulted into the lead for Wolves.

The Wolves fielded their two Socceroos Matt Horsley and Scott Chipperfield while Olympic also sent their Socceroo Pablo Cardozo into battle. The home team attacked with bravado and stormed the Olympic castle putting their defence under pressure.

The Sydney backline was superb but never caved in. Wolves' Scott Chipperfield made his runs at the last defender and constantly looked dangerous.

The game fluctuated from end to end, much to the delight of the huge crowd with many Sydney visitors applauding their boys.

In the 28th minute striker Stuart Young seemed destined to score for Wollongong with a tremendous shot, only to see the ball hitting the triangle of the cross bar and bouncing out, much to the relief of the Sydney keeper.

His shot followed a very good build-up by the Wolves. Chipperfield had another great opportunity in the 33rd minute but was stopped by good defence from Olympic.

The Wolves should have been in front by two goals at the break as assistant coach Ron Corry stated afterwards. Naturally the Olympic coach did not agree and boasted his side should have made more use of their chances.

That might have been true in the second half when Olympic equalised with a goal from Zlatko Arambasic which deflected several times off the legs and bodies of several Wolves' defenders.

They made it 1-1 in the 51st minute and had more of the game as the Wolves seemed to tire. The Olympic coach made a crucial substitution at half-time bringing on Nick Carle for Peter Zorbas and that brought more possession to the Olympic team which parked for a while in the Wolves half.

However, the Wollongong team withstood the pressure and defended well even though tired legs took their toll and Wolves coach Nick Theodorakopoulos made substitutions in the 55th minute when David Huxley came on for Alvin Ceccoli, and then in the 65th minute Esala Masi for Stuart Young.

Sydney's big trump cards Brett Emerton and Pablo Cardozo and Gabriel Mendez were kept quite by the Wolves markers.

Even though the Sydney side had more possession in the second half the Wolves came on strong towards the end with several dangerous breaks. Scott Chipperfield had a great opening in the 70th minute and was fouled badly to stop him scoring.

The resulting free-kick was cleared.

Scott Chipperfield: Great performance

Aferwards Olympic coach Branco Culina admitted there was not much between the sides, his team looked a bit sloppy in the beginning and he was forced to make positional changes to counter-act some Wolves attacks, mainly from Chipperfield.

Ron Corry standing in for head coach Nick Theodorakopoulos was of a different view and said his side played well, absorbed all pressure and perhaps seemed to tire under the relentless attacks but kept their composure.

He thought the Wolves could have been ahead at the break by more then one goal.

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NATIONAL SOCCER LEAGUE

MELBOURNE KNIGHTS 3
CARLTON SC 0

By Bert van Bedaf

The Melbourne Knights netted one of the upsets of the season, beating championship contender Carlton 3-0 at Sunshine last Sunday night.

The Knights exploded with a sensational start going two goals up within 25 minutes, while Carlton had its captain Andrew Marth sent off allegedly for diving, putting their finals chances on shaky ground with a disastrous performance.

With former Knights captain Marth leading Carlton, there was always the possibility of some stick coming from both sides.

Silic was the first to see yellow for a foul on Marth after 14 minutes, but referee Brett Hugo reserved the second yellow card for Marth himself, when football's strongman jumped into the back of Knights stopper Murtala Abbas after 19 minutes.

Marth's yellow was greeted with joyful booing from the grand stand. Marth's defection to the Blues has always been regarded as a betrayal by the Croatian backed club and never been forgiven.

Another former Knight, Steve Horvat, back from overseas and a year's lay-off, lined up for his first game for Carlton and also saw yellow with the first 25 minutes.

The whistleman, one referred to by Brisbane coach John Kosmina as "Brett Ego", red-carded "Stabber" Marth for his second "offence", booking him for diving in the box after what appeared to be a clear tackle from behind by Adrian Cervinski.

Everybody thought Hugo was going to award a penalty, therefore Marth's send-off came as a thunderbolt to the Blues and Carlton coach Stuart Munro showed his utter dismay over the decision.

"The player (Silic) was off the pitch and the referee waved him straight back on and he scored a goal and we're a goal down. The goal took the wind out of me and my players' sails," Munro said.

"Then Marth is sent off. If Marth was clipped it should have been a penalty. Three times we've had a player sent off and three times it proved to be wrong. It's becoming an absolute nightmare. The bottomline is there were two crucial decisions made by Mr Hugo.

"We're also key players down (injuries and suspensions), but we can't use that as an excuse.

"The Knights were the better team and they deserved their win. We've got younger players coming up, but they're not taking their chances.

"I blame the players and the 'keeper (Anastasiadis) for the second goal. That was shocking. I don't know what he was thinking," he said.

With Marth gone and Lubo Lapsansky suspended, Carlton was bereft of a midfield and had no manpower to fill the vacuum and regain control.

By then the Knights were already two goals up and well on their way to victory.

Mark Silic limped off injured in the 10th minute after a clash with David Terminello, but Hugo waved for the recovered midfielder to come back on just when Joe Rajher robbed Moreira off the ball and moved it forward.

Silic swooped on the loose ball, ran into the centre and from 30 metres out unleashed a right-foot drive that took Carlton 'keeper Dean Anastasiadis by surprise and disappeared in the top right corner for the opening goal.

The Knights pushed their advantage another notch in the 23th minute when right wingback Paul Magdic crossed the ball into the goal mouth past Horvat.

Anastasiadis dived but let the ball slip underneath him and Alex Kiratzoglou enjoyed an easy tap-in to set the Knights on their way to an upset victory over the fancied Blues.

Cervinski finally got his chance with two minutes left. Magdic produced a beautifully weighted cross from the right, which Cervinski hammered home with a powerful header on the run from close range to seal a memorable Knights win over the hapless Blues.

Andrew Math: Sent off

Knights coach Vlado Vanis saw Silic's goal in the same vein, but didn't see anything wrong with it.

"The referee waved for Silic to come on. He got the ball and had an excellent shot. I can't complain," Vanis said.

Although he had no clear view of the Marth incident, Vanis believed it was a close decision. "The linesman lifted his flag for diving, that's all I know," he said.

The Knights are now undefeated in seven matches, with two wins against quality opposition (Sydney Olympic was their other scalp) for six wins thus far in the season.

Vanis is holding out on at any finals chances. "We're fitter now than we were two months ago.

"We're working hard and we're scoring goals. That's the main thing," he said.

But two things have emerged from the torrid clash; the Knights are on a roll,

MARCONI STALLIONS 2
SYDNEY UNITED 0

By John Economos

Marconi's two substitutes, Darren McDonald and Harry Karl, both scored life-saving goals to give their side a much needed 2-0 victory over a stubborn, and a man short, Sydney United last Sunday night at the Marconi Stadium.

United plunged into deeper troubled waters when trailing by a goal. They then lost right midfielder Aytec Genc in the 74th minute through a red card as he clashed with Marconi's steely midfielder Smith. Referee Gerry Connolly was on the spot to sight Genc have a swing at Smith near the grandstand touchline.

Having struggled against a defiant United in the first session, Marconi drew first blood 24 minutes after the break through blond midfielder McDonald who had come on in the 16th minute to replace Italian import Pierluigi Di Gia who broke down with what was believed to be a groin strain.

Durable midfielder and 'Man Of The Match' Mike Smith engineered McDonald's goal with a clever cross from the left, allowing the substitute to hammer a full blooded low drive into the corner of the target.

Blond striker Karl doubled Marconi's tally barely 60 seconds after coming on in the 79th as he raced onto a through ball from midfielder Chad Gibson to bury it into the net.

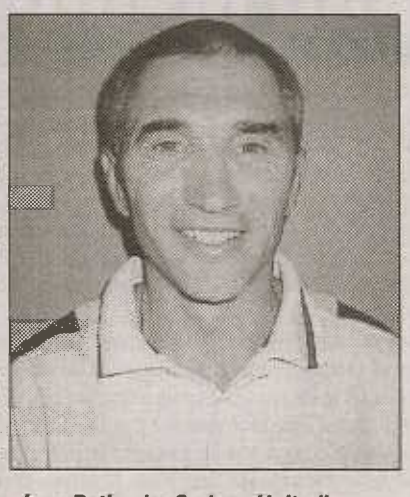
Just a minute after his goal, Karl could have had a second but skied a Smith cross over the horizontal.

Ironically it could have been United that grabbed the lead just three minutes before the break. But mobile striker Tommy Pondeljak although breaking well into the clear and into the Marconi box, blasted into the outstretched body of Marconi's 'keeper David Aceski.

In the 21st minute Marconi's Mike Smith pulled off a magnificent block tackle to deflect a potentially dangerous Genc shot from right in front.

Kris Trajanovski Marconi's striker, in the 64th minute veered infield towards the first post but his blast forced United's keeper Steve Tolios to make a fine save.

Best performers for Marconi were Smith, Farah and Gibson whilst for United central marker Tommy Maric and midfielders Vince Savoca, Ante Moric and Nahuel Arrarte did very well.



Ivan Petkovic: Sydney United's new coach.

After the match a satisfied Marconi coach Eddie Krncevic stated: "We started slow and we knew it was not going to be an easy game for us. We deserved the three points in the end even though it was never going to be easy regardless where United are coming on the ladder.

"The boys played well in the second half and I felt sorry for Di Gia who had worked hard to get fit yet broke down early in the match with a possibly torn abductor muscle. He's a good organiser but McDonald came on and scored. It was also a credit to Harry (Karl) who came on and scored. We now have a few players coming back such as captain Brad Maloney, Francis Awaritefe and Karl.

"These three points now take us up to fifth spot and it's been six games without defeat. We now go to face South Melbourne on Sunday and try to put pressure on them," ended Krncevic.

Meanwhile new coach and former United great midfield soldier, Ivan Petkovic, could only lament: "In the first half we more than matched Marconi and created two or three good chances, but unfortunately we didn't capitalise on them. Our players moved around well up to the first 15 or 20 minutes of the second half, but then we had some players who are still not fit or strong enough to play for the full 90 minutes."

And as far as the sending off of Genc, Petkovic would only say: "I was disappointed in Genc because of his experience. As for Tommy Pondeljak, well he had a quiet game for us. We have to do more work and will be fitter and maybe have Velimir Kupresak back from his long injury," ended Petkovic.

ABSW PLAYER OF THE YEAR

ROUND 22

Adelaide v Perth Glory		**Auckland v Newcastle**	
3-G. Naven	(PG)	3-M. Wilson	(NB)
2-D. Mori	(AC)	2-F. De Jong	(AK)
1-N. Sabljak	(AC)	1-G. Owens	(NB)
Canberra v Parramatta		**Northern Spirit v Brisbane**	
3-B. Hamilton	(CC)	3-P. Bilokapic	(NS)
2-M. Gibson	(PP)	2-A. Griffiths	(NS)
1-A. Clark	(CC)	1-P. Grierson	(BS)
Gippsland v South Melbourne		**Wollongong v Sydney Olympic**	
3-D. Marcina	(GF)	3-D. Cervinski	(WW)
2-M. Gotis	(GF)	2-N. Carle	(SO)
1-M. Curcija	(SM)	1-D. Mennillo	(WW)
Marconi v Sydney United		**Melb Knights v Carlton**	
3-M. Smith	(MS)	3-M. Silic	(MK)
2-B. Farah	(MS)	2-P. Magdic	(MK)
1-T. Maric	(SU)	1-A. Thompson	(C)

PROGRESSIVE POINTS
AFTER ROUND 22

David Cervinski	(Wollongong Wolves)	24
Pablo Cardozo	(Sydney Olympic)	22
Andy Harper	(Newcastle Breakers)	22
Michael Curcija	(South Melbourne)	18
Angelo Costanzo	(Adelaide City Force)	18
John Buonavoglia	(Newcastle Breakers)	18
Mehmed Durakovic	(Gippsland Falcons)	16
Con Boutsianis	(Perth Glory)	16
Lubo Lapsansky	(Carlton SC)	15
Andrew Crews	(Parramatta Power)	14
Gabriel Mendez	(Sydney Olympic)	14
Gareth Naven	(Perth Glory)	14
Mike Smith	(Marconi)	12

TURN TO PAGE 32 FOR MATCH STATISTICS

Eat Well Live Well Premier League

eat well live well

DIABETES AUSTRALIA Victoria

VicHealth

★★ ROUND THREE WRAP ★★

By Bert van Bedaf

Bulleen Zebras felt the high and lows of victory and defeat cursing through the striped herd in the space of a week, beating Port Melbourne 3-2 at home last Monday night in round two, but falling to Fawkner 2-1 last Sunday.

In the other Monday night match Melbourne Raiders lost 2-1 to Altona Magic to complete round two.

Houdini could not have done a better job against the Sharks. If ever there was a great escape, snatching victory from the jaws of defeat, it was Bulleen's last effort win against Port Melbourne.

The Sharks were up 2-0 through a penalty by Damon Collina, playing against his former club, and a good run by Nick Tsaltas, who accurately hit the far corner with an angled shot from just inside the box.

But Bulleen coach Alan Davidson turned things around when Warren Spink came on after the break.

The crafty veteran, still oozing class, put Danny Gnjidic through in the 76th minute, and the Bulleen captain pegged a goal back with a clever left-foot chip over Sharks 'keeper Chris Roche.

Port's fortunes nose-dived when referee Rick Arturi sent off Zlatko Mihajdovic in the 81st minute for an elbow on Dean Tartaglia.

Spink equalised with a lightning rebound in the 78th minute and young Berkan Sakaci became the toast of the dressing room, scoring the winner with a looping header three minutes into time-added on.

Davidson paid tribute to his players. "They showed character. People had us written off. It's all about character, toughness, commitment and quality," Davidson said.

Port coach Peter Tsolakis said his team had given the lead away, but going a player down also made a difference.

"We gave away two cheap goals, but I thought with 11 men we could have held out. But with a man down it became hard to defend," Tsolakis said.

Both teams lost in round three. The Sharks suffered a humiliating 4-1 defeat against Heidelberg United and departed coach at Western Suburbs Taki Svigos has already been spotted at the Sharks, who may want to have a close chat with Tsolakis over two losses in a row.

In other round three matches, leader Green Gully remained undefeated, beating St Albans 2-1 in a thriller at home.

Oakleigh and Altona Magic fought out a 1-1 draw, while Preston beat Bentleigh Greens 1-0 for its first win of the season. Altona East Phoenix keeps on rising, more like a souffle than from any ashes, with a 2-1 win over Melbourne Raiders, who are yet to register a win.

CANNONS WITHSTAND MAGIC

By David Davutovic

Newly promoted Oakleigh managed to withstand a late Altona Magic onslaught to come away with a 1-1 draw at Jack Edwards Reserve last Friday night.

With the mercury soaring at 37 degrees at kick-off, players found it difficult to adjust to the hot conditions, and it was left to two substitutes to score the only goals of the game.

Oakleigh's depleted squad was missing the services of Aki Alagozidis and youngster Juan Sastre, both through injury and the side lost another attacker early in the game.

Midway through the first half Oakleigh striker Dinos Sevastiadis was taken off the field with a suspected broken hand as he landed awkwardly after being tackled.

The Magic were unlucky not to take the lead in the 40th minute, when a long-range free-kick found its way to defender Simon Micevski who slotted it home, only to be disallowed for offside.

The second half saw relentless attacking from both sides and Andrew Strapelias almost gave Oakleigh the lead with an audacious chip that caught Altona's keeper Darren McGrath by surprise.

It took 54 minutes for the opening goal of the game to arrive courtesy of substitute Arthur Aridas, who stabbed the ball home after some fine lead-up play from the right flank.

Altona striker Steve Markovski, who substituted Johnny Cvetanovski at halftime, came close to scoring, but his 62nd minute header from Toni Trifunov's inch perfect cross sailed just over the crossbar.

Three minutes later it was an identical move that brought the undoing of Oakleigh, this time, however, Markovski managed to plant it in the top corner with a decisive header.

Markovski was a constant menace for the Oakleigh defence with his pace and it was his cross in the 70th minute that located John Sapazovski, but Nick Koletsas saved superbly in the Oakleigh goal.

Altona had two more chances to seal the match, firstly through the menacing Markovski who struck the bar in the 86th minute. A minute later George Jolevski had a goal-bound effort blocked by some dogged Oakleigh defenders, leaving both teams with a point each.

BERGERS TROUNCE SHARKS

By John Rigas

Heidelberg recorded their first victory back in the top flight with a thumping 4-1 away win against Port Melbourne Sharks.

Heidelberg surprised a large crowd of about a thousand spectators at Anderson Reserve with an impressive display against their fancied opponents, with Alfonso Opazo netting a hat trick.

The Bergers opened their account in the 28th minute when Cameron Brown headed towards goal. Port goal keeper Chris Roche committed himself but was beaten by the pacy Opazo.

The Sharks equalised in the 53rd minute, when a cool John Papas beat his namesake, Manny Pappas, from inside the box.

But Port Melbourne's joy did not last long as Opazo gave Heidelberg the lead with a close range strike one minute later.

Heidelberg increased its lead through Leigh Tsoumerkas whose shot took a deflection, giving Roche no chance to save.

Opazo rounded off the scoring in the 68th minute with a penalty to complete his hat-trick and give the Bergers a deserved win.

PHOENIX RISES AGAINST RAIDERS

By John Rigas

Altona East maintained its 100 per cent record with a hard-fought 2-1 victory over Melbourne Raiders at Paisley Park.

The Phoenix came from behind after Raiders striker Nick Lazarevski scored a screamer from 18 metres with a shot on the turn after 35 minutes.

Altona levelled two minutes before half time, when defender John Dimitrelos scored on the volley from 18 metres, with his shot landing in the top corner.

Altona scored the winner one minute before full-time when a Dimitrelos corner found sibstitute Bill Armour (on for Giovanni DeAmicis) who tucked the ball away from close range.

CAVALIERS JUMP SAINTS

By Ivan Perkov

The local derby at Green Gully Reserve was undoubtledly the match of the round, with Green Gully beating St Albans narrowly 2-1.

Both sides come off convincing wins promising a tough match.

The Cavaliers took the game to St Albans from the first minutes and the Saints had no answer.

In the 21st minute George Georgiadis sent a searching ball into the penalty area and George Svigos (the smallest player on the pitch and left unmarked) jumped to lob his header over an advancing Marjian Vunderl, who had been left stranded by his defence.

But in the 39th minute, after a well-worked move, Steve Mangos found himself alone on the edge of the box. His toe-poke let Becvinovski in too easily and the journey marksman slid the ball past Vunderl for Gully's second goal.

Late in the second half, the Saints got more of the play. Kon Sianidis and Damien Vojtek came close, but it was Ivan Razov's persistence in the 61st minute that helped St Albans to score.

After a scramble Razov received the ball and charged towards goal. He was brought down by Zoran Markovski and Vojtek converted the penalty for 2-1.

The next 25 minutes was end to end attack with both sides having several chances, but in the end Green Gully deserved victory on the depth of its squad.

LIONS MAUL GREENS

By George Koukeris

Sporting the old Altona Magic colours as their away strip, Bentleigh feel victim to the Connor Reserve jinx as they failed to overcome Preston, who beat the Greens 1-0.

The Lions, who have started the season on shaky ground, desperately needed to secure victory to stay competitive, but they made hard work of it.

What should have been a four-goal thrashing ended in an intensifying last 10 minutes as Preston hung on to its single goal lead from half time.

Dimce Panev should have given the Lions the lead after 33 minutes, when Greens 'keeper Glenn Clarke saved a one-on-one with the Macedonian striker.

Panev also stranded on Clarke a minute later, but both missed chances were erased in the 38th minute, when Panev controlled the ball inside penalty zone, rounded two defenders and produced a blitzing through-ball for Josip Kozic to thunder into the net on the run.

Preston dominated most of the second half, with Damien Everetts, Zoran Drogriski and Alex Josifovski controlling midfield. Bentleigh hardly had an attempt on goal, running into a solid Preston defence.

But the chances continued to fall for the Lions and in the 71st minute, Josifovski missed another chance in front of goal.

Lions coach Dragi Blazevski said he was delighted with the efforts of 'keeper Steven Talevski, who made his senior debut for the Lions. Bentleigh Greens coach Harry Chalkitis described his team's second loss of the season as "one of those games", when no matter what the players do, it does not end up clicking together.

Victorian Soccer Federation *Eat Well Live Well*

PREMIER LEAGUE 2000

ROUND 3

Oakleigh Cannons 1 (A Aridas) **Altona Magic .....1** (S Markovski)

Heidelberg Utd 4 ... (A Opazo 3 L Tsoumerkas) **Pt Melb Sharks .....1** (J Papas)

Altona East .....2 (J Dimitrelos B Amour) **Melb Raiders .....1** (N Lazarevski)

Preston Lions ....1 (J Kozic) **Bentleigh Greens ...0**

Fawkner Blues ...2 (F Tramontana A Sherifovski) **Bulleen Inter .....1** (W Spink)

Green Gully .....2 (Svigos, Becvinovski) **St Albans .....1** (Vojtek)

Reserves

Altona Magic .....6 **Oakleigh Cannons ..1**

Pt Melb Sharks ...3 **Heidelberg Utd 1**

Altona East .....2 **Melb Raiders 2**

Bentleigh Greens .5 **Preston Lions 0**

ROUND 4

Saturday 26 February 2000

Altona Magic v Green Gully Cavaliers
(6/8 pm, Paisley Reserve)

LEAGUE LADDER

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Green Gully Cavaliers	3	3	0	0	9	2	9
Altona East Phoenix	3	3	0	0	5	2	9
Altona Magic	3	1	2	0	5	4	5
St Albans Saints	3	1	1	1	6	4	4
Preston Lions	3	1	1	1	3	3	4
Oakleigh Cannons	3	1	1	1	4	5	4
Bentleigh Greens	3	1	0	2	3	3	3
Bulleen Zebras	3	1	0	2	4	6	3
Fawkner Blues	3	1	0	2	3	5	3
Heidelberg United	3	1	0	2	6	9	3
Port Melb Sharks	3	1	0	2	4	7	3
Melbourne Raiders	3	0	1	2	3	5	1

Sunday 27 February 2000

Bentleigh Greens v Altona East Phoenix
(4/6 pm, Kingston Heath Reserve)

St Albans Saints v Port Melbourne Sharks
(4/6 pm, Churchill Reserve)

Monday 28 February 2000

Bulleen Zebras v Preston Lions
(6.15/8.15 pm, Veneto Club)

Heidelberg United v Fawkner Blues
(6.15/8.15 pm, Olympic Village)

Melbourne Raiders v Oakleigh Cannons
(6.15/8.15 pm, Epping Soccer Stadium)

NSW SUPER LEAGUE

— ROUND 7 —

EAGLES THUMP BERRIES

Cant.-Marrickville 0
Parramatta Eagles 4

By Julian Murphy

Two goals in each half saw an impressive Parramatta defeat an undermanned and lacklustre Canterbury Marrickville at Henson Park on Sunday night.

Although Canterbury were missing four first graders through injury, Parramatta did well to overpower their old rivals and win their first game since Round 3.

Both teams appeared a little disjointed in the opening stages and Eagles' coach Roberto Viera animatedly voiced his displeasure from the sideline. As is so often the case, the game's first goal, coming in the 22nd minute, livened up proceedings.

Eagles' forward Nikoice Joseski picked up the ball on the edge of the area, drew in two defenders before passing to fellow striker Adam Anderson. Anderson hit a left-foot shot back across the face of goal, eluding Berries' keeper Frank Mikuletic, and into the right hand corner of the net.

The intensity of the game began to pick up and when Parramatta's Alex Trpkovski was brought down on the edge of the area a brawl almost erupted. The referee managed to calm things down but not before handing yellow cards to both Trpkovski and Canterbury's Zoran Ilic.

In the 44th minute Anderson made a good run out of the midfield, found Tom Bazdaric to his right who did well under pressure to get the ball to an unmarked Joseski.

Joseski calmly placed the ball past Mikuletic for the Eagles' second. On the stroke of half time Trpkovski could have made it three for the visitors but his thunderous shot cannoned into the bar.

This miss left the door open for Canterbury in the second half but they failed to make any impact. Steve Christoforidis and Nikas were trying hard for the Berries but they lacked support.

In the 63rd minute Parramatta broke away from a Canterbury corner. Anderson, who was having a great game, made another surging run towards goal. He was disapossessed but the ball fell to big Mark Reveley to drive home, effectively ending any chance of a result for Canterbury.

In the 88th minute Trpkovski finished the rout for the visitors when he punished a defensive error by Angelo Markopolous making the score 4-0.

Parramatta coach Viera was full of praise for his team's effort. "Previously we had been trying to play too much in the opposition's half so tonight we started from the back and went from there. It was nice to put it together on the park as we've been struggling a little of late."

■■■■

As a matter of record Julian Murphy has covered seven Super League 2000 matches. Ironically all victories have gone to the visiting side.

Any side with a tough away fixture can contact ABSW for exclusive rights to Julian.

DEMONS ON FIRE

Blacktown City Demons 3
Macarthur Rams 1

By Don O'Regan

Defending champions Blacktown City Demons moved within sight of the competition leaders in the Super League with a dogged 3-1 victory over the Macarthur Rams at Lynwood Park.

In a game dominated by the two goalkeepers, Fernando Greco for the Demons and Peter Munsie for the Rams, either side looked capable of taking the three points.

In the first half Macarthur's influential striker Eric Williams was proving a handful for the Demons' defence but on the three occasions he broke free from the Blacktown defensive shackles he was denied by outstanding saves from Greco.

When play moved to the other end of the park, Munsie was on hand to thwart Blacktown's Jason Bennett and Damien Brown. Just before half-time he pulled off a magnificent save, diving full length to make a spectacular one-handed parry from a goal-bound strike from the boot of Blacktown's mercurial forward, Naoki Imaya.

Just when it looked like neither goal could be breached two goals followed within two minutes. In the 57th minute the Demons scored one of their typical team goals.

Slick passing between Steve Riches and Imaya after a quickly taken throw-in led to Bennett receiving the ball on the edge of the six-yard box and the ace striker fired the ball into the net beyond the stranded Munsie.

Two minutes later and the balance was restored with a spectacular individual effort from Macarthur's Chad Bishop, the attacking midfielder on loan to the rams from NSL club Wollongong Wolves.

Striding down the wing, Bishop left a posse of Blacktown defenders in his wake and launched a long looping shot from wide on the left that dipped over the head of Greco into the goal.

With two minutes to go Damien Brown directed a long-free kick deep into the Macarthur goal area and the defence failed to deal cleanly with the threat.

The ball bobbled around and Blacktown wingback Steve Riches barely contained his joy as the ball fell to his feet allowing him to stab it home from close in.

The Demons nabbed their third on the stroke of full-time with Mark Hagger pouncing on a clinical pass from Brown to slam the ball home from eight metres out.

■■■■

The Blacktown City Club would like to extend their sincere condolences to long serving player Damon Langan and his family who sadly lost his father on the morning of the game following a long illness.

TOP SCORERS
AFTER ROUND 7

PLAYER	CLUB	GOALS
Steve Karavatakis	Leichhardt	7
Johnny Ghisso	Bonnyrigg	6
Jim Bakis	St George	5
Mark Hagger	Blacktown	4
Colin Luff	Bonnyrigg	4
Steve Christoforidis	Canterbury Marrickville	4

TABLE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	PTS
Leichhardt Tigers	7	5	1	1	19	11	8	16
Central Coast Coasties	7	4	2	1	15	8	7	14
Blacktown City Demons	7	4	1	2	18	7	11	13
St George Saints	7	4	1	2	14	8	6	13
Bonnyrigg White Eagles	7	4	0	3	19	15	4	12
Bankstown City Lions	7	3	3	1	11	7	4	12
Canterbury Marrickville	7	4	0	3	14	15	-1	12
Parramatta Eagles	7	2	3	2	15	13	2	9
Fairfield Bulls	7	2	2	3	10	12	-2	8
Macarthur Rams	7	1	3	3	10	12	-2	6
Manly Warringah Dolphins	7	1	3	3	9	12	-3	6
Eastern Suburbs	7	2	0	5	8	13	-5	6
Sutherland Sharks	7	2	0	5	9	22	-13	6
Penrith Panthers	7	1	1	5	5	21	-16	4

SCORERS

St George Saints 5 (M Brennan 11m, A Petratos 14m, J Bakis 61m, E Augerinos 70/81m), **Sutherland Sharks 0**

Bonnyrigg White Eagles 4 (C Luff 25/54/79m), **Central Coast Coasties 1** (P Preston 70m)

Macarthur Rams 1 (C Bishop 59m), **Blacktown City Demons 3** (J Bennet 57m, S Riches 88m, M Hagger 90m)

Penrith Panthers 1 (S Borsato 14m), **Fairfield Bulls 2** (M Hoenselaars 44m, G Zabetakis 60m)

Manly Warringah 1 (S Hickman 77m), **Eastern Suburbs 2** (J Pillemer 11m, J Aschner 90m)

Leichhardt Tigers 1 (J Bruni 75m), **Bankstown City Lions 2** (G Trposki 46m, T Joseski 60m)

Canterbury M'Ville 0, Parramatta Eagles 4 (A Anderson 22m, N Joseski 44m, M Reveley 60m, A Trpkoski 87m).

RESULTS

	1st	U/21	U/18
St George v Sutherland	5-0	3-0	1-1
Bonnyrigg v Central Coast	4-1	0-1	3-1
Macarthur v Blacktown	1-3	1-5	1-2
Penrith v Fairfield	1-2	2-0	0-1
Manly v Easts	1-2	0-3	0-1
Leichhardt v Bankstown	1-2	1-4	6-2
Cant-Marr v Parramatta	0-4	0-2	1-5

NSW SOCCER FEDERATION

Super League

Kick-off times – 7.00pm (1st Grade), 5.00pm (U21s), 3.00pm (U18s) unless otherwise stated

Saturday 26 February 2000

Central Coast v Macarthur Rams
Pluim Park

Blacktown v Canterbury Marrickville
Gabbie Stadium

Penrith Panthers v Eastern Suburbs
Andrews Road Field

Bankstown City v Manly Warringah
Jensen Park, 6.00pm (1st), 4.00pm (U21s)

Sunday 27 February 2000

Bankstown City v Manly Warringah
Jensen Park, 6.00pm (U18s)

Fairfield v St George
Nineveh Field

Sutherland Sharks v Bonnyrigg
Seymour Shaw Park

Parramatta Eagles v Leichhardt
Melita Stadium

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National Youth League 1999/2000

NORTHERN DIVISION (ROUND 22)

FRIDAY 18 FEBRUARY 2000

A.C.T.A.S. .....0 ...**Parramatta Power** 3
(Angelucci 24, Campbell 29, B Santalab 74)

SATURDAY 19 FEBRUARY 2000

Sydney United Colts .....6 ...**Wollongong Wolves Colts** 0
(Bastac 7, 60, 85, Bazdaric 34, Mrdjen 67, 80)

Northern Spirit .....4 ...**N.S.W.I.S.** 3
(R Griffiths 11, 75, Monie 52, Snyder 71) (Holman 18, 85, Carney 58)

Northern Spirit Colts .....0 ...**Newcastle Breakers** 2
(Tomich 32, Angievski 34

A.I.S. .....0 ...**Newcastle Breakers Colts** 1
(Blanning 2)

SUNDAY 20 FEBRUARY 2000

Wollongong Wolves .....2 ...**Sydney Olympic** 1
(Spencer 82, Dimitrievski 84) (Tome 69)

Sydney Olympic Academy ..2 ...**Marconi Stallions Colts** 4
(Cevenini 11, Sabuncuoglu 42) (Junior 2, Brosque 17, 83, Sandoval 67)

Marconi Stallions v Sydney United (Match postponed)
Bye - Q.A.S.

	P	W	D	Bye	L	F	A	Pts
Parramatta Power	**21**	**16**	**3**	**1**	**2**	**61**	**16**	**51**
Northern Spirit	20	14	3	1	3	62	24	45
Sydney Olympic	20	13	3	2	4	56	26	42
Q.A.S.	19	12	1	2	6	53	30	37
Newcastle Breakers	20	12	1	1	6	37	22	37
Marconi Stallions	18	12	0	1	6	50	24	36
A.I.S.	19	11	2	1	6	59	25	35
Wollongong Wolves	21	10	2	1	9	31	32	32
Sydney United	18	9	1	1	8	29	36	28
A.C.T.A.S.	20	7	6	2	7	30	40	27
Newcastle Breakers Colts	22	8	2	1	12	34	43	26
Sydney Olympic Academy	20	8	1	2	11	40	65	25
N.S.W.I.S.	19	5	3	2	11	31	34	18
Marconi Stallions Colts	21	4	4	1	13	31	61	16
Northern Spirit Colts	21	4	3	1	14	21	52	15
Sydney United Colts	19	3	3	2	13	22	46	12
Wollongong Wolves Colts	18	0	2	1	16	9	80	2

ROUND 22

By Theo Katsaros

Parramatta Power continues their march towards the Minor Premiership with a convincing 3-0 away win over the A.C.T.A.S. The Power are six points ahead of their nearest rival and must be favoured to hold on to top spot.

John Angelucci put the Power ahead after 24 minutes and five minutes later Lachlan Campbell doubled the lead. Brendan Santalab netted after 74 minutes to put the issue beyond doubt.

The Sydney United Colts recorded their biggest win of the season as they thumped the hapless Wollongong Wolves Colts by 6-0. The hosts led 2-0 at the break and continued to pour on the pressure after the break to score another four times.

Josip Bastac opened the scoring after seven minutes and completed his hat-trick in the second-half with goals in the 60th and 85th minutes. Marko Bazdaric netted after 34 minutes to increase the lead. Antony Mrdjen found his scoring touch after the break and scored in the 67th and 80th minutes.

Despite scoring three times the N.S.W.I.S. came away from Christie Park with nothing. Unfortunately for the Institute, the Northern Spirit found the back of the net on four occasions to gain maximum points. The 4-3 result cements second place on the league ladder for the Spirit.

In an entertaining match Ryan Griffiths scored twice to take his season's tally to 13, whilst James Monie and Adam Snyder recorded singles for the Spirit. In reply, Brett Holman, who also scored twice, and David Carney scored the N.S.W.I.S. goals.

Luke Tomich and Robert Angievski scored within two minutes of each other as the Newcastle Breakers defeated the Northern Spirit Colts by 2-0. The Breakers are vying for a top four spot and did their hopes no harm collecting another three points away from home.

Matthew Sutton of the Spirit and Heath Simpson of the Breakers were sent from the field early in the second half but this made no difference to the match. Neither side could capitalise on the extra space available.

The A.I.S. suffered a disappointing 1-0 home loss at the hands of the Newcastle Breakers Colts. The Breakers have made a habit of beating the top teams and this season have completed the double over former league leaders Sydney Olympic.

A second minute strike by Andrew Blanning was enough for the visitors. The A.I.S. chased the game thereafter and despite creating countless opportunities, the goal they so desperately sought eluded them.

Last season's grand finalists Sydney Olympic have stumbled over the past couple of months yet still remain in the top three. Olympic must lift their game however, if they hope to keep in touch with the leaders.

The Wollongong Wolves conquered the boys in blue with two late goals. After a scoreless first half, Norman Tome gave Olympic the lead after 69 minutes. The points seemed to be safe but strikes to Noel Spencer and Steven Dimitrievski in the 82nd and 84th minutes stole the game for the Wolves.

The battling 2-1 win may be all the Wolves require to kick-start their chase for a finals berth.

The Sydney Olympic Academy were beaten by the Marconi Stallions Colts in yet another high scoring encounter involving the Olympians. The 4-2 result could have gone either way as the teams went to the break all-square.

Josaia Sauturaga Junior, the Stallions Fijian import, opened the scoring after just two minutes but Christian Cevenini squared the ledger in the 11th minute. Alex Brosque restored the Stallion's lead six minutes later but Yavuz Sabuncuoglu levelled the scores three minutes before half-time.

The Stallions then scored twice in the second stanza courtesy of goals from Rod Sandoval and Brosque. Sandoval also scored against his former team-mates in the first clash between the two teams late last year.

The fixture between the Marconi Stallions and Sydney United was postponed due to the participation of the Stallions Youth team in the annual Viareggio Youth Soccer Tournament in Italy. The Stallions will be out of action for the next three weeks as they represent Australia in this world renowned youth soccer tournament.

ROUND 23

FRIDAY 25 FEBRUARY 2000

Newcastle Breakers v A.I.S. (Breakers Stadium - 5.15pm)
Parramatta Power v Q.A.S. (Parramatta Stadium - 5.30pm)

SUNDAY 27 FEBRUARY 2000

A.I.S. v Q.A.S [Rd 16] (AIS Soccer Field - 3.45pm)
Wollongong Wolves Colts v A.C.T.A.S. (Brandon Park - 4.00pm)
Sydney United v Sydney Olympic Academy
(Sydney United Sports Centre - 4.00pm)
Marconi Stallions Colts v Sydney United Colts
(Marconi Stadium - 4.00pm)
Sydney Olympic v Northern Spirit
(Belmore Sports Ground - 4.00pm)
N.S.W.I.S. v Northern Spirit Colts (Valentine Park - 7.00pm)
Newcastle Breakers Colts v Marconi Stallions (TBA)
Bye - Wollongong Wolves

LEADING SCORERS

Russell Miner	**Q.A.S.**	**14**
Ryan Griffiths	Northern Spirit	13
Daniel Severino	Marconi Stallions	13
Elias Demourtzidis	A.I.S.	11
Kevo Gulesserian	Marconi Stallions (A.I.S.)	10
Daniel Kukucka	Parramatta Power	10

SOUTHERN DIVISION (ROUND 13)

WEDNESDAY 16 FEBRUARY 2000

Fawkner Blues .....1 ...**Melbourne Knights Academy** ..2
(Robert Senes) (Alan Paleka, Andrej Majer)

SATURDAY 19 FEBRUARY 2000

South Dandenong .....3 ...**Albury Wodonga** 1
(Victor Memeti, Festim Zekiri, Qemal Korcarevski) (David Martin)

Gippsland Falcons .....0 ...**South Melbourne** 3
(Anthony Magnacca 2, Jim Tsekinis)

SUNDAY 20 FEBRUARY 2000

Melbourne Knights .....1 ...**Bulleen Inter** 0
(Anthony Pelikan)
Preston Lions v Bye

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Carlton	**12**	**10**	**2**	**0**	**46**	**7**	**32**
VIS	12	8	1	3	32	10	25
Bulleen Inter Kings	13	8	1	4	36	22	25
Melbourne Knights	12	6	2	4	35	24	20
South Melbourne	11	6	0	5	29	12	18
South Dandenong	12	5	3	4	18	21	18
Gippsland Falcons	11	4	3	4	17	24	15
Fawkner Blues	12	3	3	6	13	26	12
Melbourne Knights Academy	10	3	0	7	9	17	9
Albury Wodonga	13	2	2	9	18	46	8
Preston Lions	12	1	1	10	11	55	4

ROUND 14

By Roy Hay

Bulleen Inter lost its chance to go to clear second on the Southern Division ladder when it lost to Melbourne Knights by the only goal of the game at Knights Stadium on Sunday.

The Knights got off to a flying start with a goal inside three minutes from the league's leading scorer Anthony Pelikan, who now has 13 for the season in only 12 games. Chris Tabak came racing down the left and his pin-point cross was put away by Pelikan.

Tabak kept up his wing runs until substituted late in the game and Ivan Gelemanovic held the Knights defence together, assisted by Mark Paleka. For Bulleen Xhezair Sulemani and Paul Presti were the pick of the players. The match became quite defensive on the part of the Knights after they scored, but Bulleen kept them honest for the rest of the game. Miro Kustera reports that "It was not pretty to watch but it was a really competitive game".

Melbourne Knights Academy also recorded a win by 2-1 away to Fawkner last Wednesday. Robert Senes scored after 12 minutes for the Blues and it took the Academy until the 41st minute to get on terms through Alan Paleka. Andrej Majer scored what proved to be the winner in 62 minutes and the Academy held on despite some serious Fawkner pressure.

South Dandenong had a good 3-1 win at home to Albury Wodonga. Festim Zekiri opened for South Dandenong in 21 minutes and Victor Memeti made it two just before the interval. Thereafter Qemal Korcarevski got a goal on the hour, but Albury Wodonga refused to give up and David Martin got a deserved goal in 78 minutes.

South Melbourne travelled to the Latrobe Valley to beat Gippsland Falcons by 3-0. It was a couple of experienced players who did the damage, Anthony Magnacca scoring twice and Jim Tsekinis getting the other. Magnacca's two goals came in the third and 17th minutes which more or less settled the result.

Carlton and the VIS had already played their Round 13 match the previous week-end which finished in a 1-1 draw.

SATURDAY 26 FEBRUARY 2000

Preston Lions v Gippsland Falcons, (B T Connor Reserve, 4 pm)

SUNDAY 27 FEBRUARY 2000

South Dandenong v VIS, (George Andrews Res, 4 pm)
South Melbourne v Fawkner Blues, (Bob Jane Stadium, 3.30 pm)
Melb Knights Academy v Melbourne Knights,
(Knights Stadium, 4pm)
Carlton v Bulleen Inter (To be arranged)
Albury Wodonga v Bye

LEADING SCORERS

Anthony Pelikan	**Melbourne Knights**	**13**
Adam Curcija	Bulleen	9
Andrew Mashoian	outh Melbourne	9
Angelo Motsiopoulos	Carlton	9
David Martin	Albury Wodonga	9
Ace Stojcevski	Carlton	7
Xhezair Sulimani	Bulleen	6
Deniz Ekici	Carlton	6
Naum Sekulovski	VIS	6
Adam Curcija	Bulleen	5
David Debevc	Carlton	5
Carmelo Impiombato	Melbourne Knights	5
Josip Loncaric	Melbourne Knights	5
Ali Ibrahim	Preston Lions	5
Evan Papadopoulos	VIS	5
David Terek	VIS	5
Mark Tsiorlas	VIS	5

JUNIOR SOCCER

Soccer NSW's Hidden Jewel

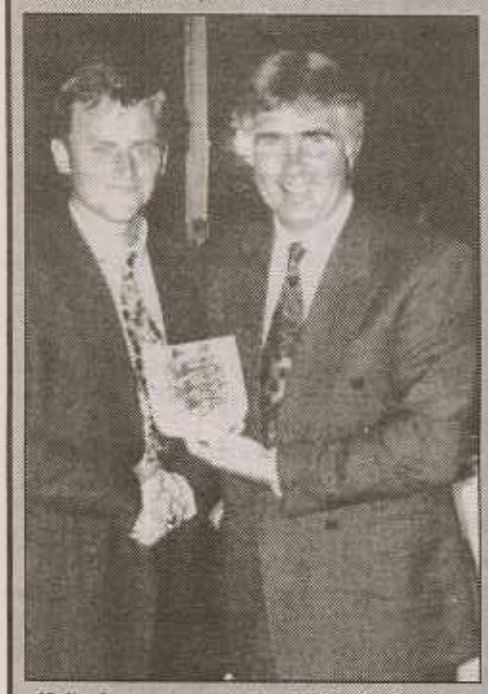
By Mark Stavroulakis

Youth soccer has been a main aspect of the development of soccer in Australia. The amount of youth players making debuts for their respective national league teams has risen phenomenally.

Many people ask the question, where do most talented youth players in Australia come from? It is easy to point the finger at the AIS, who predominately make up a number of exceptional youth talents that either go onto making a National League side, or choosing greener pastures and going abroad to try their luck.

The AIS defiantly has been the driving force behind exceptional youth players, but there has been one organization that has always been over shadowed by this so-called, 'Big Brother'. This organization is based in NSW, and is called the New South Wales Institute Of Sport.

Seven successful Joeys: All ITC graduates.



Kelly Cross accepts the FA Youth Coach of the Year award from Bobby Gould.

Like the AIS, the NSW Institute Of Sport offers the same standards, if not identical training, only that it is based in Sydney and that it caters for many talented youth players from around the state.

The ITC, as it is called, has been working vigorously in attaining a program of high standard that develops players into a 'superstar' like status.

The ITC provides these talented players with many top methods in order to foresee the player develop in a professional way. The people running these techniques are the main force in making this program so successful and enjoyable.

At the ITC, professional guidance is a must, especially from a coach's point 'of' view. The current mentor who is holding the reigns at the Institute is Kelly Cross.

This man has been involved at the Institute for quite some time now, gaining valuable experience from various youth expeditions held around the world, and of course being a part of the successful Australian Joeys who were runners up at the recent U17 World Cup.

I had a valuable chance in catching up with Kelly, and asked him some questions on the ITC itself and what various features and abilities the Youth of soccer have in store for the future.

Compared to other countries around the globe, Australia rates amongst the strongest and toughest outfit in the world when it comes to Youth soccer. The reason for this was shown at the 1999 U17 World Cup in New Zealand, where the Aussie's achieved their best ever result.

Cross commented that, "Youth soccer in Australia is quite good. Compared to the rest of the world like Europe and South America we are up there with the best of them. From an U17 point-of-view, we are as good as anyone else but after that age we tend to drop off. Overall however, youth soccer is going well and from all indications things should only get better."

The Institute is also highly regarded as a 'power house' in Youth development around the world.

The fact that the Institute runs so many programs and holds a professional set up makes this one of the most unique youth development programs in the world. Yet people in Australia tend to ignore or not know what, where or how the ITC functions or in the manner in which it exists.

Cross stated that, "As opposed to clubs from Europe we are of a high standard, whether it be facilities or management. The head of the youth program at Leeds in England have stated that the ITC's program is light years ahead of theirs.

"We at the ITC work in order to develop a player the proper way, and make them think, act and play like a professional, something that lacks in other youth setups not only in Australia but globally as well."

One of Kelly's highlights was of course being apart of the Successful Australian U17 side that represented this country so well.

Kelly stated that, "Being a part of the Joeys was a brilliant experience and something that I will long remember. It was good seeing that the two years preparation paid off and that the lads gave it all they could in order to strive for that ultimate goal, the World Cup. The aspect that made me happy however was the fact that out of the Joeys Squad a total of seven boys from the ITC were present.

"This brought a smile to my face, as I have watched most of these lads progress from the age of 12, going through our various zone programs, state teams, all this finally paid off, and that was the main thing that made me a happy man."

There are 26 sports that are associated with the NSW Institute of Sport. Soccer, of course being one of their main advantages in producing future stars in that sport. The facilities are of world class standard at Parklea, where the thought of having a whole block of land dedicated to soccer is that of a dream.

"The facilities we have at the Institute are that of high quality. Things like having a Video analysis room for watching players and picking out their mistakes, a world class fitness laboratory which is up there with the world's best," said Cross.

"The fields are that of genuine class, all these things are what is needed to perform tasks in developing a player correctly," he continued.

Not only does the NSW ITC teach its players how to play the game, academics isalso a prime target in giving the players the chance to have something behind them besides soccer.

"We at the ITC not only think from a soccer players point-of-view, but we feel as though skills such as media, lecture skills and educational qualities are also needed in order to succeed in life itself.

"Career advisors are at hand to assist all the players in whatever needs to be spoken about school, jobs, the HSC and generally making them fit not only for the Soccer World, but preparing them for life itself," said Cross.

The ITC program has hosted many world class players in the past, and many players have either made it abroad or are playing in the National League.

Players such as the exciting Harry Kewell from Leeds, UTS Olympic and Olyroo captain Brett Emerton, Northern Spirit 'live wire' Matthew Langdon and Parramatta Power 'New Boy' and captain of the Joeys Mark Byrnes are just some of the many prospects that the ITC has produced over its existence.

Many of the Australian public know that Byrnes plays for Parramatta Power or Harry Kewell plays for Leeds, but what they don't not know is where they came from. What helped mould them into the professionals they are. The ITC has been ignored in a sense that not too much attention has caught the public eye, but slowly people are starting to realize that the ITC is the real deal.

NSW ITC squad 1998-99.

The current ITC squads boast players from the ages of 14 to 18 years old. The current ITC team boasts a potential six or seven future Joeys for the 2001 World Cup.

This is a testament that the program the ITC is running is proving to be successful every year.

"With the loss of 12 players to either National League clubs or overseas, the team this year has been that of a new squad," said Cross.

"Of course we had a successful ITC team last year as from that squad, seven were named as Joeys, but I believe that in my current squad, the record of seven might be broken for the 2001 World Cup. Players such as Michael Brown, Predrag Bojic, Jacob Rex, Brett Holeman and a couple of other players provide a style of enthusiasm and youth to our game.

"Most of these boys are 15 years old and are in the running for the 2001 World Cup. Also, the fact that we have two of the youngest players in the National League, at the tender age of 14 — Nicholas Stavroulakis and Vince Repipi are future prospects for my squad."

In the past it has been mentioned that having a player as young as 14, participate in the National Youth League with older players is very cruel and something that should not be done.

Kelly disagrees: "Younger players strive to play better against older and tougher opponents. When you get the best players at the ages of 14, 15 and 16, the thought of having them play their own age groups is completely and utterly wrong.

"What development do they get when they play their own age? There's no personal goal in beating their own age group, where as when they get an older and more mature player to play against, this brings the best out of the player.

"This is of course a good chance to watch these lads play as you don't know in this funny game of soccer that one of the players mentioned above might never be seen again in Australia. The outside market beckons, so now's a good chance to watch these 'young guns' while you still have the chance."

Lastly a unique program that has just recently been put in place at the Institute is that of dual registration. This means that a player can still be apart of their club team who has accepted this notion, the likes of Northern Spirit and Marconi have agreed to work with the ITC program.

An example is that a player leaves for the ITC, trains and plays with them, and as soon as that player has lived up to the program, he ventures back to the respective National League sides as a better player.

The ITC nurture the players then give them back to their respective sides. "Hopefully apart from Northern Spirit and Marconi who have already been settled in this program, the rest of the Sydney clubs should follow their lead," said Cross.

"What we at the Institute want to do is develop the player and make him the best player he can be, then giving them back say after a two or three year spell, hopefully progressing and being a future talent for that club."

The New South Wales Institute of Sport is doing a hell of a job in creating quality youth players. Even though the public has shunned and ignored the fact that a NSW ITC does exist, slowly the name itself is beginning to hit the horizons of NSW Sport and the Australian Public in general.

The ITC is a unique program that we here in NSW seem to take for granted. However, we have seen many players develop through the ranks of the ITC. The question beckons though: How far can this scheme go? The answer is...it only gets better!

SOCCER WOMAN

By Janene Mar

TRIMBOLI KEEPS IT SIMPLE

Before you ask — no, Leanne Trimboli (SASI Pirates/Matildas goalkeeper) is not related to Paul Trimboli (South Melbourne/Socceroo striker).

It's the one question immediately asked by soccer journalists when they first come across the name of the Matildas' latest addition to the goalkeeping ranks.

Yet they need not look far if it's a story angle they're after. For Leanne Trimboli, despite her newness to the Squad, has her own interesting tale to tell, as much off the soccer field as on.

Trimboli was first selected for Australia last October for the Tour to China, one of three brand new players called in by National Coach Chris Tanzey to make the trip. The news came as an absolute surprise to the then 23-year-old.

"I didn't expect it at all," were her comments at the time. "I was hoping there'd be a goalkeepers camp and I'd get picked for that, so this is pretty special."

Trimboli has won her way into the Matildas despite having just half the number of opportunities to be seen by the National Coach during the last three national league seasons.

Perth-based veteran Australian keeper Tracey Wheeler has always been drafted into the SASI outfit for the Ansett Summer Series, and each match, coach Kevin McCormack has had to decide between the two.

Fortunately for Trimboli, McCormack has remained loyal to the local talent throughout, and time on the pitch has been shared evenly between the two keepers.

Of SASI's four grandfinal appearances, Trimboli has played two to Wheeler's one (both were recovering from knee reconstructions during the 1996/97 season).

"I'd rather play every week, but I think it makes it more special every time I do go out there. The heat's on to perform."

Yet Trimboli considered giving the game away just last year. In fact, had Matildas keeper Belinda Kitching not announced her shock retirement after the World Cup, Trimboli may well now be preparing for the Sydney Olympic Games in quite a different sport — taekwondo. A black belt and SA State Champion for 1999, Trimboli thought of trying her luck at qualifying for the Olympic team.

"I'd been doing taekwondo for ten or eleven years, then after a break, I went back to it again recently. I was actually going to nominate for the qualifying tournaments."

The first of those taekwondo tournaments was held the weekend before she ended up travelling to China with the Matildas. Thankfully for us, Trimboli had decided to put taekwondo on hold for a short time upon hearing about Kitching's retirement.

These days, the focus is concentrated solely on kicking footballs rather than people, the decision to stick with soccer more than paying off.

Trimboli experienced her first international tour from the bench, not getting on the park for either of the two matches against world number two China. The large enthusiastic crowds of 15,000 at each game provided enough of an experience none the less, and any disappointment of not making her debut was not too great.

"At that first game, I thought, 'Don't put me on'. I'd never been in front of that many people, and I was quite happy watching that game. In the second match, we were down 3-1, so I thought if I go on now, we're already struggling a bit. It was a bit of a shock to be over there in the first place anyway."

But the tour was to end with a huge boost for Trimboli, Tanzey asking her to relocate to Canberra and train with the Squad as an OAP Squad member. Things were still on the up — she remained very much in Tanzey's plans.

"I was pretty happy. Even then it was not far to the Olympics. I was surprised — to go from just playing national league and State, to being asked to train fulltime at the AIS. I knew I'd do it. I knew I was not in a position like Tracey Wheeler to stay in Adelaide.

Leanne Trimboli: Her focus is now on kicking footballs and not people.

I knew this was the first time I'd been asked so I should really make the move. The opportunity may not come up again. Then I just thought about work, my house, my dogs, the car I'm paying off."

Aside from leaving home and family, moving from Adelaide meant also putting her career on hold, Trimboli having graduated as a Police Officer over two years ago.

It took some effort to put together her application for leave without pay, the delay in receiving approval causing her further angst. With two weeks left before she was to travel to Canberra, the official okay had still not come through from the Commissioner.

"The boss at my station said 'Just go', as it had been approved but just not in writing. The team at work have been really good.

They raffled off of a Calendar which I got signed to raise a bit of money for me."

Trimboli's older sister now works on that same team, having also recently graduated, which helps Leanne keep in touch with everyone.

Juggling work and training saw Trimboli often absent from training at SASI, often left to train by herself, missing around four or five sessions each month.

Even now in Canberra, she has been unable to totally leave behind her police duties, needing to fly back to Adelaide to appear in court over a previous case.

With that trial since scrapped, Trimboli knows she will have to up and leave once again when proceedings start all over again soon. One can only hope it doesn't fall in the middle of the upcoming test series against Nigeria (if selected), although she'll have no choice but to comply.

Meanwhile, the wait to make the big international debut did her no harm, and when finally Trimboli's name was called out to play her first match for Australia, against the Czech Republic in last month's Australia Cup, she was steeled and ready for the challenge.

"I was really looking forward to playing. By that stage I think I was ready. I knew I wouldn't get the Sweden game, but I thought I might get on against the Czechs. When I was told, I was pretty happy."

"(Walking out), it was a mixture of being nervous and emotions that I'd finally achieved a long term goal I'd had I had to pinch myself to realise what was happening. But when I was out there, I felt it was just like playing national league, so I continued to think of it like that. It just felt that way. I guess against a better team, it might be different."

It was a match the Matildas were expected to win, but a slow and unsteady start saw debutante Trimboli called in for the rescue after just five minutes as the Czechs bustled in attack.

Australia were caught in possession in their defensive third, and Trimboli came off her line and flew through the air in stunning fashion to punch clear a certain Katerina Doskova goal.

Trimboli was kept busy in goal until the 23rd minute sending off of Czech Marie Tlachova helped to finally relieve the pressure off the Australians. It ended with a clean sheet to Trimboli, a 3-0 result.

"I saw her turn our player and thought 'Oh god, here goes'. I was happy I made the save. Then they had a few corners, and I was thinking, 'Don't tell me the whole game's going to be like this. But we settled and I don't think I touched the ball in the second half."

"Chris Tanzey spoke to me after and said I looked really confident — not overawed by it all. So I took that on board because I've been known to struggle under pressure in the past because I was too nervous. But here I'd kept control."

But Trimboli was back 'benching it' for the next match, Tanzey opting to play a lot of his older players for the last match of the tournament, which this time was a disappointment for the South Australian.

Trimboli played several sports as a youngster, including cricket and basketball in addition to taekwondo, and was a relatively late starter in soccer. Asked to play by a friend of her mother's, Trimboli took up soccer at the age of fourteen, making her first State Team in 1990 to compete in the National Junior Championship.

She volunteered to play keeper from the start when the question was raised 'Who's going to play in goals this week'.

Yet Trimboli has been known to come off the bench as a field player during national league, and in her usual fearless approach, is never afraid to push forward towards goal.

On one such occasion at the end of the 1998/99 season, Trimboli was thrown into the fray with time ticking down in SASI's last chance to nudge ahead of NSW for a place in the grandfinal.

Running at the defence, Trimboli was fouled, winning a freekick which was duly converted by teammate Sharon Black to seal the coveted prize.

Back in Canberra, Trimboli misses her dogs, her house, friends and family, and her usual routine, and says that Canberra as a short-term home without those things "drags a bit". On the field, she is pleased with her progress although aware there is much still ahead.

"With every training game I play, I feel more confident. My style of game has changed. Chris wants me to play out from the back more, which I'm not used to. I'm starting to feel more comfortable."

With the Olympic Games approaching ever nearer, Trimboli refuses to focus her personal attention on the big one and her prospects of selection for the team. Preferring to minimise the pressure and the associated anxieties, there are other more pressing aims which fill the OAP player's thoughts.

"I don't like to talk about that," was her instant remark when asked about the Olympics.

"There's that fear of jinxing myself. Even though it's only seven months away, that's seven months of hard work. I just want to keep focused."

"I do sometimes think what the Olympics would be like, but I try not to. I prefer to concentrate on what session's next and set myself smaller goals. Now it's to make the team for the Nigeria series and to make sure of gaining a Scholarship. Then after that it will be to make the Pacific Cup."

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QUEENSLAND SOCCER FEDERATION

"Perry Park" Abbotsford Road, Mayne Brisbane 4006.
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XXXX LEAGUE

	P	W	D	L	GF	AG	Pts
Brisbane City	1	1	0	0	4	1	3
IPSW Knights	1	1	0	0	3	1	3
B'berg Waves	1	0	1	0	2	2	1
Wynnum	1	0	1	0	2	2	1
Brisbane Lions	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
Mt Gravatt	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
Toowoomba Utd	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
Taringa Rovers	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
Rochedale Rov	1	0	0	1	1	3	0
Gold Coast	1	0	0	1	1	4	0

ROUND 1 SCORES

Mt Gravatt .....1 Toowoomba Utd 1
Gold Coast .....1 Brisbane City 4
Brisbane Lions .....1 Taringa Rovers 1
Rochedale Rov .....1 IPSW Knights 3
B'berg Waves .....2 Wynnum 2

DIVISION ONE SOUTH

	P	W	D	L	GF	AG	Pts
Eastern Subs	1	1	0	0	4	0	3
Beenleigh	1	1	0	0	2	1	3
Capalaba	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
Slacks Creek	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
Olympic Utd	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rocklea Utd	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Souths Utd	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Redlands Utd	1	0	0	1	1	2	0
Acacia Ridge	1	0	0	1	0	4	0

ROUND 1 SCORES

Slacks Creek .....0 Capalaba 0
Redlands Utd .....1 Beenleigh 2
Acacia Ridge .....0 Eastern Subs 4
Rocklea Utd v Olympic Utd (Played Sunday night)
Souths Utd - bye

DIVISION ONE SOUTH

	P	W	D	L	GF	AG	Pts
North Star	1	1	0	0	4	0	3
Pine Rivers Utd	1	1	0	0	3	0	3
North Pine	1	1	0	0	3	1	3
Albany Creek	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
Newmarket	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
Uni of Qld	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Grange Thistle	1	0	0	1	1	3	0
The Gap	1	0	0	1	0	3	0
Mitchelton	1	0	0	1	0	4	0

ROUND 1 SCORES

Mitchelton .....0 North Star 4
Grange Thistle .....1 North Pine 3
Pine Rivers Utd .....3 The Gap 0
Albany Creek .....1 Newmarket 1
Uni of Qld - bye

McLAREN GOES FULL CIRCLE

By Glenn Davis

Everything in life is cyclical so they say and Strikers skipper Stu McLaren can vouch for it.

McLaren is currently enjoying a superb season and relishing the role of club captain after joining the Strikers last season where he played up front.

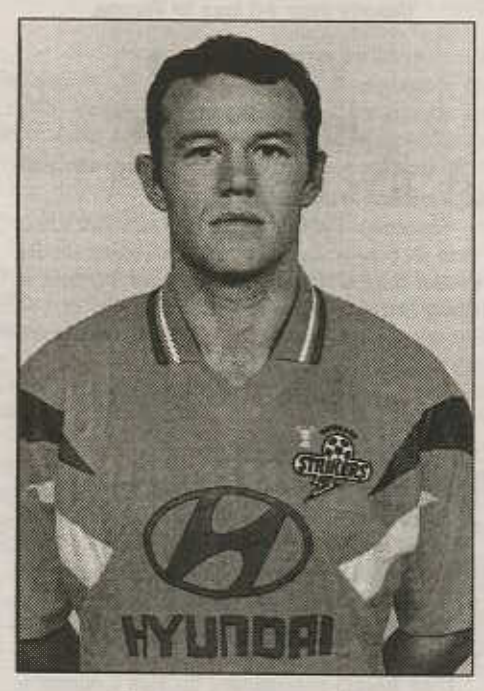
Like goalkeepers, every fullback rates themselves as a potential striker and McLaren proved conclusively last season he could more than adequately fill the role if called upon.

But this season, coach John Kosmina bought well in the off season with limited funds "stealing" striker Paul Foster who has taken over McLaren's role up front and is one of the league's leading scorers.

Kosmina had better plans for McLaren who reverted to his former role as a defender and took over the captaincy from Glen Gwynne.

Scottish born McLaren came to Australia as a five-year-old and lived in Brisbane until he was 12 before moving to Rockhampton for the next five years during his crucial soccer development years.

It didn't take long for McLaren to settle in with the Strikers last season as he already had forged strong friendship with midfielder Jeromy Harris and keeper Clint Bolton.



Stuart McLaren: Enjoyed his time up front.

During his days in Rockhampton, McLaren played in the same club side as Harris but fate soon saw them take separate paths.

McLaren performed so well at the Under 15 national championships that he was offered a scholarship at the Australian Institute of Sport in 1992 by former head coach Ron Smith.

"That's where I met Clint Bolton and became friends with him," McLaren said.

After serving his time at the AIS, a former Rockhampton coach, Richard Evans enticed McLaren to join Wollongong in 1993.

"I spent three seasons at Wollongong under David Ratcliffe but I always wanted a chance to play in Europe," he said.

"I met a friend, Stuart Beedie, who played with Dundee United and he organised a trial with Sterling Albion in the Scottish First Division.

"I spent two years with Sterling Albion and scored nine goals in 18 games."

McLaren concedes most of his career was played as a defender but he enjoyed his role up front.

"I was mostly a defender with Steve O'Connor and Smith at the AIS although I did play some games up front," he said.

"At Wollongong I also played as a defender most of the time but I started to play up front towards the end of my time there.

"In Scotland though I was always a striker and I enjoyed it there."

McLaren had a brief stint in Hong Kong with first division club Hong Kong Rangers before quitting the club after a contractual dispute.

"I was meant to stay the season in Hong Kong but a few things went sour over my contract so I came back to Brisbane," he said.

McLaren is quite mobile and aggressive but has matured a lot since his early days.

"I used to have a bit of a temper as a young bloke but I've learnt to control it," he said.

McLaren acknowledges youth is the key to success with any club and believes the Strikers are on the right road to developing young talent within Queensland.

"With a 20-man squad comprising of 13 players under 25 and three the other side of 30, both the immediate and long term future, from a playing staff point of view, seems assured," he said.

FAMOUS PHOTOS

Fred Ennis meets superstar of the 80's Michel Platini.

WORLD

ITALIAN SERIE A

Inter's Roberto Baggio in action against Piacenza. Inter won 3-1.

AC MILAN 2

LAZIO 1

A crucial win for Milan who took a two-goal lead into the break thanks to two penalties from Croat Zvonimir Boban.

The first came in the 38th minute when Paolo Negro was judged to have handled and Boban converted again seven minutes later after Lazio goalkeeper Luca Marchegiani brought down Massimo Ambronsini.

Milan maintained their dominance in the second half but were hanging on at the end after Lazio's Simone Inzaghi caught Christian Abbiati out of position and slotted home from the edge of the area.

LECCE 1

BOLOGNA 1

A gritty mid-table battle which came alive only after the break when Giuseppe Signori's goal from a free-kick was cancelled out by Cristiano Luccarelli's 11th goal of the season for Lecce.

Bologna will be the happier with a point after having midfielder Giovanni Piacentini sent off.

PIACENZA 1

INTER MILAN 3

Laurent Blanc's first goals in Italy, either side of an equaliser from fellow defender Daniele Delli Carri, put Inter in the driving seat.

Christian Vieri continued his return to form with Inter's third goal after Delle Carri was sent off.

TORINO 1

CAGLIARI 1

Cagliari took the lead through a disputed penalty after Alessandro Grandoni was judged to have pulled down striker Jason Mayele.

Uruguay's Fabian O'Neill scored from the spot kick but Torino levelled before the interval through their top scorer Marco Ferrante.

Torino's new Croatian signing Krunislav Jurcic was sent off for a second bookable offence.

UDINESE 5

BARI 1

Udinese scored five goals from five different players and Denmark's Martin Joergensen found the back of the net for the fourth consecutive league match.

The pick of the goals was Stefano Fiore's strike from 25 metres. Udinese move to within a point of sixth-placed Parma.

Mario Stanic: On the scoresheet for Parma despite their 4-3 loss to Verona.

VENEZIA 0

JUVENTUS 4

A scoreline which flatters Juventus, who nevertheless deserved their victory.

Alessandro Del Piero put the Turin side ahead from the penalty spot in the first half before striking partner Filippo Inzaghi poached a late hat-trick to ensure Juventus remain top of the league.

VERONA 4

PARMA 3

Parma threw away a 3-1 halftime lead to record their seventh league match without a win.

Goals from Mario Stanic, Diego Fuser and Hernan Crespo should have been enough for Parma but uncharacteristic mistakes from defenders Lilian Thuram and Saliou Lassissi gifted Verona two of their goals.

Dino Baggio compounded his side's miserable afternoon with his second dismissal since the New Year.

AS ROMA 4

FIORENTINA 0

Vincenzo Montella grabbed a hat-trick of close-range efforts to stake his claim for a place in Dino Zoff's Italy squad to face Sweden next week.

Japan's Hidetoshi Nakata scored Roma's other goal and had a hand in all three Montella strikes.

Fiorentina have now gone 19 consecutive away matches in the league without a win.

REGGINA 1

PERUGIA 1

An overhead kick gave Massimiliano Esposito his first goal of the season and Perugia a 1-0 halftime lead but Reggina equalised shortly after the interval.

Roberto Baronio pouncing on a rebound off the Perugia woodwork.

Action from the match of the round. Milan defeated Lazio.

RUSSO WRITES

By Joe Russo

The referees are in the spotlight in the Serie A at the moment and it is taking a lot of the glamour off the world's best league.

The situation is ugly and it appears to be getting worse. Players fighting in the tunnel (after the recent Venezia-Cagliari game), players pushing referees (Franceso Totti of Roma) and coaches, such as Fabio Capello (Roma), Sven Goran Eriksson (Lazio) and Marcello Lippi (Inter), scathing in their recent attacks on the whistle-blowers.

The President of Lazio, Sergio Cragnotti, has even called for the introduction of professional referees. So, where will it all end?

Will a full-time referee no longer make human errors? Is it time for a video replay to be introduced? And, what about a second referee, as was experimented in the mid-week Coppa Italia tournament earlier in the year?

The pressure is enormous on the Serie A referees and the close scrutiny of slow-motion replays on television, only adds to their woes.

Slow-motion replays on a Sunday night have been part of the Serie A in Italy for well over 20 years. It is called the 'Moviola' and it is part of a top rating Sunday night show on the day's play.

The replays are discussed by a panel of commentators and former players, and every possible angle at every possible speed, is shown to the viewers.

An interesting comment was made recently by Ciro Ferrara, Juventus and Italy's defender, when he said that there should be Sunday without the 'Moviola.'

Unfortunately, someone should remind Ferrara of an incident in a game a couple of years ago when he had his leg broken. Playing for Juve against Lecce, he was tackled by a defender called Alessandro Conticchio and it was the 'Moviola' that, had the said defender punished and the nation sympathising with Ferrara.

The only solution is, (a) referees to improve on their recent performances and (b) substantial fines levied at players, coaches and officials who criticize them.

Tunisia's fourth place in the recent African Nations Cup had an Italian 'flavour' to it. Their coach is Franco Scoglio, the former Torino, amongst other clubs, coach in the Serie A.

Scoglio is known in Italy as the 'Professor' even though his results as a club coach were never spectacular.

Scoglio made no secret of the fact that he was chasing a job as National team boss with some country before finally landing the job with Tunisia.

Interesting enough, the same Scoglio made a lightning visit (about a week) to Australia just after Eddie Thomson resigned as Socceroo coach. Officially, he was here on holiday.

His name is Joe Cole, he is 18 years old (born 8th November 1981) and is an attacking midfielder for West Ham Utd.

In their recent game against Bradford (5-4) he scored and impressed the Juventus talent scout watching the game.

According to reports in both the Italian and English press, Juventus are said to be ready to pay nearly A$20M for his services and lure him to Italy for the 2001/02 season.

Cole is highly recommended by his teammate Paolo Di Canio who describes him as an "extraordinary talent." High praise indeed and so much so, that the 'Old Lady' of Italian football is on the verge of signing Cole with the intention of keeping him in England for at least another season.

WORLD

FA CUP QUARTER FINALS

TRANMERE 2
NEWCASTLE UTD 3

Newcastle seem headed for yet another FA cup final after falling over the line against first division side Tranmere.

Newcastle started the better of the two and after skipping to a 2-0 lead, through goals by Gary Speed in the 27th and Didier Domi after 36, the game looked all over.

Wayne Allison's 45th strike for Tranmere breathed new life into the match but once again Newcastle flexed their muscle to regain their two-goal margin through Duncan Ferguson on 59. Gary Jones pulled one back 14 minutes from the end but Newcastle held on.

Tore Andre Flo: Started the goalscoring rout against Gillingham. Chelsea won 5-0.

CHELSEA 5
GILLINGHAM 0

In what can only be described as a mauling, Chelsea booked their spot in the FA Cup semi-finals following an easy 5-0 win over Gillingham.

The FA Cup fairy tail for Gillingham looked over before the game really got started.

Goals to Tore Andre Flo after 16 minutes, John Terry on 49, George Weah after 51, Gianfranco Zola 86 (pen) and Jody Morris in the 88th sent Chelsea to a Semi-final clash against Newcastle.

EVERTON 1
ASTON VILLA 2

Aston Villa left Goddison park with the desired result although the sending off of Italian Benito Carbone was a sour note in an otherwise historical game for the club.

A 17th minute goal to Steve Stone put the side ahead ony for Everton to pull back level three minutes later through Joe Max-Moore.

Carbone then turned hero for Villa putting in the winner on 45 minutes before being sent off one minute from time.

BOLTON 1
CHARLTON 0

The sending off of Dean Holden three minutes after halftime could not stop Bolton's charge to the semi's of the Cup after a 1-0 win over fellow first division side Charlton.

The winner coming from Eidur Gudjohnsen on 47. The goal was enough the hand Bolton a clash with Villa in April.

Newcastle skipper Alan Shearer celebrates with team-mates as Newcastle advanced to this year's FA Cup semi-finals.

ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE

LEEDS UNITED 0
MANCHESTER UTD 1

Manchester may well have wrapped up the title race with their gutsy 1-0 win at Elland road.

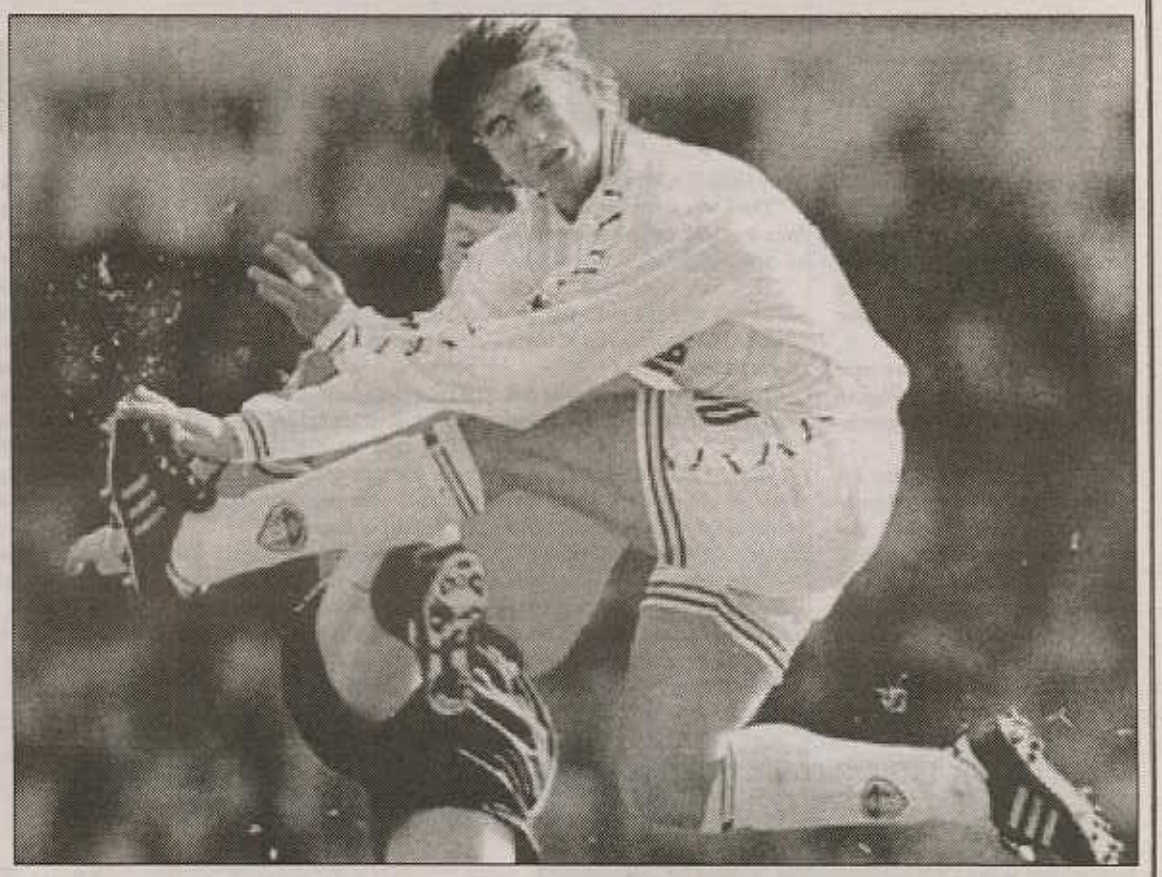
Andy Cole's early second half goal seperated the sides, giving United a six point lead atop of the table.

Leeds had a golden chance to equalise late in the match but Lee Bowyer somehow missed an empty net, blasting a shot from in the six yard box over Bosnich's bar.

MIDDLESBROUGH 2
COVENTRY CITY 0

Middlesbrough fought hard to win this one although they deserved all three points after losing 4-0 less than a week ago against Aston Villa.

Goals to defender Gianluca Festa in the eighth minute and Hamilton Ricard 12 minutes later was enough to get Boro over the line.



Harry Kewell: In the rough as Leeds succumbed to a second-half Andy Cole strike at Elland Road.

WORLD

UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

GROUP A

Porto (Portugal)
Hertha Berlin (Germany)
Barcelona (Spain)
Sparta Prague (Czech Republic)

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 23

Hertha Berlin	1	Barcelona	1
Michalke 33		Luis Enrique 14	
Sparta Prague	0	Porto	2
		Drulovic 77, Jardel 84	

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 8

Porto	1	Hertha Berlin	0
Drulovic 78			
Barcelona	5	Sparta Prague	0
Kluivert 44, 63			
Luis Enrique 45, 76			
Guardiola 59			

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 1

Barcelona v Porto
Hertha Berlin v Sparta Prague

TUESDAY, MARCH 7

Porto v Barcelona
Sparta Prague v Hertha Berlin

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 15

Barcelona v Hertha Berlin
Porto v Sparta Prague

TUESDAY, MARCH 21

Hertha Berlin v Porto
Sparta Prague v Barcelona

Table

Porto	2	2	0	0	3	0	6
Barcelona	2	1	1	0	6	1	4
Hertha Berlin	2	0	1	1	1	2	1
Sparta Prague	2	0	0	2	0	7	0

GROUP B

Bordeaux (France)
Fiorentina (Italy)
Manchester United (England)
Valencia (Spain)

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 23

Fiorentina	2	Manchester Utd	0
Batistuta 25, Balbo 52			
Valencia	3	Bordeaux	0
Farinos 60, Ilie 66, Gonzalez 88			

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 8

Bordeaux	0	Fiorentina	0
Manchester Utd	3	Valencia	0
Keane 38, Solskjaer 47, Scholes 69			

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 1

Manchester Utd v Bordeaux
Fiorentina v Valencia

TUESDAY, MARCH 7

Bordeaux v Manchester Utd
Valencia v Fiorentina

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 15

Manchester Utd v Fiorentina
Bordeaux v Valencia

TUESDAY, MARCH 21

Fiorentina v Bordeaux
Valencia v Manchester Utd

Table

Fiorentina	2	1	1	0	2	0	4
Manchester Utd	2	1	0	1	3	2	3
Valencia	2	1	0	1	3	3	3
Bordeaux	2	0	1	1	0	3	1

GROUP C

Bayern Munich (Germany)
Dynamo Kiev (Ukraine)
Real Madrid (Spain)
Rosenborg Trondheim (Norway)

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 24

Dynamo Kiev	1	Real Madrid	2
Rebrov 85pen		Morientes 17, Raul 48	
Rosenborg	1	Bayern Munich	1
Skammelsrud 47		Jancker 10	

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 7

Bayern Munich	2	Dynamo Kiev	1
Jancker 6, Sergio 80		Rebrov 50	
Real Madrid	3	Rosenborg	1
Raul 17, Savio 85, Carlos 90		Carew 47	

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 29

Real Madrid v Bayern Munich
Dynamo Kiev v Rosenborg

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 8

Bayern Munich v Real Madrid
Rosenborg v Dynamo Kiev

TUESDAY, MARCH 14

Real Madrid v Dynamo Kiev
Bayern Munich v Rosenborg

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 22

Dynamo Kiev v Bayern Munich
Rosenborg v Real Madrid

Table

Real Madrid	2	2	0	0	5	2	6
Bayern Munich	2	1	1	0	3	2	4
Rosenborg	2	0	1	1	2	4	1
Dynamo Kiev	2	0	0	2	2	4	0

GROUP D

Feyenoord (Netherlands)
Olympique Marseille (France)
Lazio (Italy)
Chelsea (England)

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 24

Marseille	0	Lazio	2
		Stankovic 64, Conceicao 78	
Chelsea	3	Feyenoord	1
Babayaro 45, Tore Flo 67, 86		Julio Cruz 90	

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 7

Feyenoord	3	Marseille	0
Cruz 72, 90, Bosvelt 83			
Lazio	0	Chelsea	0

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 29

Lazio v Feyenoord
Marseille v Chelsea

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 8

Feyenoord v Lazio
Chelsea v Marseille

TUESDAY, MARCH 14

Lazio v Marseille
Feyenoord v Chelsea

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 22

Marseille v Feyenoord
Chelsea v Lazio

Table

Chelsea	2	1	1	0	3	1	4
Lazio	2	1	1	0	2	0	4
Feyenoord	2	1	0	1	4	3	3
Marseille	2	0	0	2	0	5	0

TOP EURO CLUBS SAY NO

Europe's top clubs brought their complaints about losing players to international duty to UEFA last week, demanding European Soccer's governing body push for a universal calendar that fits their needs.

The clubs' demands have once again put UEFA on a collision course with FIFA, the world governing body.

FIFA president Sepp Blatter has repeatedly called for a worldwide co-ordinated calendar but his preferred plan would see the European season changed from August-May to one beginning in February and ending in November.

"The season from August to May should not be changed to February-November," said UEFA general secretary Gerhard Aigner.

"There was a very strong feeling from the clubs that this is not wanted.

"They want to stay with the season as it is now and make sure that any international calendar is based on this season.

"There will not be a calendar that changes from February to November.

"Having this clear standpoint I think we can now tell those who continuously talk about this change...that this is not for Europe."

While the two-day meeting at UEFA's lavish new headquarters on the shore of Lake Geneva, is being billed as a workshop involving the 32 teams in the Champions League and the top 16 in the UEFA Cup, the discussions revolved primarly around the issues important to the G-14.

UEFA has steadfastly refused to discuss anything directly with the G-14, an increasingly influential lobbying group made up of Europe's most powerful clubs, including Manchester United, Bayern Munich, Real Madrid and AC Milan, but the big clubs made sure their concerns and demands were heard during the first day of meetings.

"The clubs pay the players and must have a say in whether they play in a league match or an international friendly," said Bayern Munich managing director Karl Hopfner.

"What is more important, the league or the friendly match?

"I think UEFA understands what we want. It is important that we discuss this."

With problems of absentee players created by the recent African Nations Cup still fresh in their minds, European clubs are already bristling at the thought of surrendering players for this year's Olympic Games.

The Sydney Games feature a lengthy under-23 soccer tournament, beginning in mid-September, just weeks into the European season, and will cause widespread disruption.

"The Olympic Games is a major issue, the clubs are extremely worried about that situation," said Aigner, adding that it was not acceptable to have additional competitions such as the World Club Championship placed in unsuitable positions in the European calendar.

"The problem is that the Olympics take place at different times and it just happens that this year it conflicts badly with schedules.

"Any future calendar will have to take the Olympics into account but for this year it is too late."

Aigner said, the clubs also discussed the idea of receiving financial compensation for players on international duty.

But the UEFA general secretary doubted that the various national associations, even with some financial backing from FIFA, could ever find the money to cover players' salaries.

"I have heard some players are making 50,000 pounds ($125,000) a week," said Aigner. "I cannot see Togo paying these salaries.

"Eastern countries could never pay the salaries of their top players playing for western clubs.

"I think though that associations could cover the insurance for player so clubs don't have bear this burden as well."

The clubs also discussed the Champions League and gave their backing to the current fixture list based on 17 match days during the season.

They also backed the rule that allows clubs finishing third in the Champions League group stage to go automatically into that season's UEFA Cup.

QUARTER FINALS

First Leg — April 5
Second Leg — April 19

SEMI-FINALS

First Leg — May 3
Second Leg — May 10

FINAL

Wednesday, May 24
At Stade de France

WORLD

FIFA

World Rankings

(Valid until March 15)

FIFA founded 1904

1	Brazil	70=	FYR Macedonia	138	Bahrain
2	Czech Republic	70=	Algeria	139	St Kitts & Nevis
3	France	72	Estonia	140	Tahiti
4	Spain	73	Guatemala	141	Benin
5	Germany	74	Honduras	142	St Vincent/Gr
6	Argentina	75	Mali	143	Andorra
7	Norway	76=	Burkina Faso	144	Ethiopia
8	Romania	76=	Senegal	145	Maldives
9	Croatia	78	Gabon	146	Solomon Islands
10	Mexico	79	Albania	147	Rwanda
11	England	80=	Kuwait	148	Dominica
12	Denmark	80=	Bosnia-Herzegovina	149=	Antigua & Barbuda
13	Yugoslavia	82=	Cuba	149=	Cayman Islands
14	Italy	82=	Iraq	151	San Marino
15	Portugal	84	Togo	152	Gambia
16	Sweden	85	Canada	153	Sri Lanka
17	Paraguay	86	Namibia	154	Lesotho
18	Russia	87	Armenia	155	Dominican Republic
19	Netherlands	88	Northern Ireland	156	Laos
20	Scotland	89	Moldova	157	Nepal
21	South Africa	90	Indonesia	158	Yemen
22	United States	91	**AUSTRALIA**	159	Kyrgyzstan
23	Morocco	92	Oman	160	Mauritania
24=	Colombia	93	Guinea	161	British Virgin Is.
24=	Slovakia	94	Congo	162	Surinam
26	Chile	95	Vietnam SR	163	Bermuda
27	Tunisia	96=	Belarus	164	Niger
28=	Ukraine	96=	El Salvador	165	Botswana
28=	Israel	98=	Azerbaijan	166	Chad
30	Austria	98=	Wales	167	Netherlands Antilles
31	Turkey	100	Haiti	168	Eritrea
32=	Poland	101	New Zealand	169	Cambodia
32=	Belgium	102	Mozambique	170	Palestine
34	Cameroon	103	Singapore	171=	Philippines
35	Egypt	104	Kenya	171=	Guyana
36	Greece	105	Liberia	173	Korea DPR
37	Republic of Ireland	106	Qatar	174	Guinea-Bissau
38=	Zambia	107	India	175	Chinese Taipei
38=	Bulgaria	108	Uganda	176	Central African Rep.
40	Saudi Arabia	109	Syria	177	Macao
41	Slovenia	110	Venezuela	178=	Tonga
42=	Uruguay	111	Lebanon	178=	Cape Verde Islands
42=	Iceland	112	Faroe Islands	180	Samoa
44	Peru	113	Malta	181	Pakistan
45=	Jamaica	114	Barbados	182	Cook Islands
45=	Cote d' Ivoire	115	Malawi	183	Papua New Guinea
47	Iran	116	Jordan	184	Vanuatu
48	Korea Republic	117	Malaysia	185	Brunei Darussalam
49	Trinidad & Tobago	118	Mauritius	186	Puerto Rico
50	Hungary	119	Hong Kong	187	Sao Tome e Principe
51=	Nigeria	120	Tajikistan	188	Equatorial Guinea
51=	Switzerland	121	Sierra Leone	189	Bahamas
53=	Ghana	122	Grenada	190	Belize
53=	Lithuania	123	Panama	191	Aruba
55	Finland	124	Libya	192	Seychelles
56	Angola	125=	Luxembourg	193	Nicaragua
57	UAE	125=	Kazakhstan	194	US Virgin Islands
58	Uzbekistan	127	Liechtenstein	195	Djibouti
59=	China PR	128	Myanmar	196	Turks and Caicos Islands
59=	Georgia	129=	Tanzania	197	Somalia
61	Cyprus	129=	Swaziland	198	Guam
62	Japan	131	Turkmenistan	199=	American Samoa
63=	Costa Rica	132	St Lucia	199=	Mongolia
63=	Congo DR	133	Bangladesh	201	Montserrat
65	Thailand	134	Sudan	202	Anguilla
66	Bolivia	135	Burundi		
67	Latvia	136	Madagascar		
68=	Ecuador	137	Fiji		
68=	Zimbabwe				

***Note:** Teams inactive since 1991 and teams which have not played yet do not appear in the table.*

ENGLISH PLAYERS LAZY - BOSNICH

Manchester United goalkeeper Mark Bosnich labelled English players lazy last week and hit back at claims that foreign players were ruining the game in England.

"I think it's just a lot of high-handed moaning because they don't want competition," Australian Bosnich said.

"If the English lads are good enough, they'll get in the team. That's the way it works.

"A lot of people over here don't want the competition, to have to go and work that little bit harder to make themselves better. A lot of it is just pure laziness."

Senior figures in the English game, including national manager Kevin Keagan, are concerned at the number of foreigners playing in the Premier League and believe their presence is stopping young talent from reaching their full potential.

Bosnich mocked the English sporting system for an arrogance he believes is behind the country's failure to compete at international level.

Mark Bosnich: Welcomes competition.

"It's happened to you in quite a lot of sports so you've got to be careful. Football is really the last sport that you're still doing okay in. You should welcome competition, not try to eliminate it.

"To eliminate the competition just smacks of laziness and arrogance really," he added.

"You've got the talent over here, but you don't nurture it. Not only in this sport but in a lot of sports."

Bosnich disagreed with the view that fewer foreign players would help the development of young English players.

"Everyone said that about the cricket, to stop the foreigners coming in to play cricket here. What happened? They stopped the foreigners coming in and England went even worse, they virtually went to the pits.

"The best way to protect your youngsters is not to have people like Michael Owen playing 50 or 60 games a year."

Bosnich joined United from Aston Villa in the off season and after injury problems plagued his first few months at the English champions, he has now established himself as first choice keeper at Old Trafford.

Carbone to stay at Villa

Aston Villa opened talks with Italian striker Benito Carbone last week over a new contract to keep the Italian at Villa Park.

His current deal, which Villa took over when he joined them from Sheffield Wednesday in October, runs out at the end of the season.

Until now Villa have been in no rush to negotiate a new one. But Carbone has forced manager John Gregory's hand by rediscovering his scoring form in spectacular fashion.

He recently sealed Villa's place in the FA Cup quarter-finals with a stunning hat-trick in the 3-2 win over Leeds United in the fifth round at Villa Park on January 30.

Then he added two more in the 4-0 Premier League win at Middlesbrough which took his tally to five in three games.

"He's got his act together in the last couple of weeks and has done exceptionally well," said Gregory.

"There's no urgency to rush into anything because now that Benito knows he's here until the end of the season, there's plenty of time to sort things out.

"There was a chance of him going back to Italy before the Italian transfer window closed at the end of January. But since then he's really got his head down, and has been proving to everyone what an accomplished goalscorer he can be."

But Gregory has already intimated there is some hard bargaining to be done.

"We have spoken to his agent, and after the initial shock of being told what Benito wants, I've also sat down and had a chat with the player. Obviously we would like him to stay. But any deal will have to be right for both parties."

Under the Bosman ruling Carbone is already free to talk to any foreign clubs interested in signing him.

But he's denied reports from Italy that he's been having talks with Fiorentina.

Villa have a "gentleman's agreement" with Sheffield Wednesday that they will pay the Yorkshire club an additional 1.0 million pounds ($1.6 million) if Carbone stays at Villa Park next season. He cost Villa just 250,000 pounds ($400,000) when he left Hillsborough after a public fall-out with manager Danny Wilson.

Benito Carbone: Happy at Villa Park.

VAN GAAL DEFENDS HIS PHILOSOPHY

Barcelona's Louis van Gaal made a spirited defence of his tactics last week after criticism from inside and outside the Nou Camp this week.

"This system has brought the club four trophies in two years," the coach said, referring to the two league titles, Spanish Cup and European Super Cup he has won since replacing Bobby Robson at the start of the 1997-98 season.

"The players make the system and the style of play. When the players are not doing well then the system isn't going to work either."

Van Gaal has stuck resolutely to his high-risk 2-3-2-3 system throughout a poor run of form that has brought the side just five points from their last five games.

Louis van Gaal: "I'm right."

"Contrary to what the press think the players aren't machines and they can suffer a loss of form. That's why they may disappear from the team for a while," said Van Gaal.

"It's very easy to criticise the coach because he doesn't play. We're still in three competitions and we can win them all so really we're in better shape than ever."

I'm no star — Hasselbaink

Atletico Madrid striker Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink says he still does not regard himself as a star player despite eye-catching performances since his move to Spain last year which have made him a potential transfer target.

Hasselbaink's 20 league goals for a struggling Atletico side have aroused the attention of some of Europe's top clubs, with AC Milan reportedly leading the race for his signature.

In England, where he once played for Leeds United, premier league clubs Liverpool, Tottenham Hotspur and Middlesbrough have all expressed an interest.

Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink: Just another player.

But the modest Dutch international insists he is happy at Atletico, despite the side's poor performances which have left them fighting relegation in 15th place.

"I don't consider myself a star player," Hasselbaink said.

FA CHARGES GASCOIGNE

Middlesbrough's former England midfielder Paul Gascoigne was charged with misconduct by the Football Association last week following his clash with Aston Villa's George Boateng.

Gascoigne, playing his first game since December 11, broke his arm as he crashed into Boateng during Villa's 4-0 Premier League win and left the field in tears before being taken to hospital.

Announcing the charge, the FA said in a statement: "In reaching the decision the FA is accutely aware that sadly Paul sustained a serious injury himself from the incident.

"However, we are committed to investigating allegations of violent play in the interests of the game as a whole. Having viewed video footage of the incident, we believe there is a case to answer."

The FA's headquarters in London is likely to be a busy place in the next few weeks as misconduct charges were also issued to Chelsea, Wimbledon, Leeds United and Tottenham Hotspur as well as various players and a coach following a weekend of confrontations.

Middlesbrough, meanwhile, are waiting for news on how long they will be without Gascoigne.

"Yes. He'll recover. He has always had very good healing powers," his agent Mel Stein said. "I suspect it's not going to take more than four to six weeks for him to be back again."

The incident evoked memories of another self-inflicted injury during Gascoigne's career when he wrecked his knee playing for Tottenham Hotspur in the 1991 F.A. Cup Final after a reckless challenge on Forest defender Gary Charles.

That injury, and a subsequent later fall which inflamed the problem, put him out of soccer for a year before a move to Lazio in Italy where he later broke a leg in training.

Paul Gascoigne: Case to answer.

This latest injury could well hasten Gascoigne's move from Middlesbrough — especially if they continue to slide down the Premier League table and end up in the first division next season.

He has previously been linked with a move to a club in the United States.

PROFESSIONAL REFS NEEDED

Lazio president Sergio Cragnotti has called for the introduction of professional referees after a series of rows over decisions on the pitch.

"It is an impossible situation that the fate of certain games are entrusted to a vet, an insurance salesman or a local government official," said Cragnotti.

"Professionalism is needed and refereeing must be restructured from the roots up. Some referees are products of a football that no longer exists.

"We need the highest level of professionalism and errors must be severely punished. Whoever is not up to this should leave the scene. The fact is that football nowadays is a business .... we can no longer continue to grow using ancient and amateur criteria," said the Lazio president.

Cragnotti said he supported a number of other reforms including the introduction of electronic sensors to determine whether the ball had crossed the goal line.

Among Italy's first class referees there are four insurance salesmen, a financial consultant and an expert on China, but no vets or local government officials.

Last week Juventus and Italy defender Ciro Ferrara called for an end to constant television replays of controversial decisions and the increasingly bitter rows over refereeing.

PARREIRA QUITS FLUMINENSE

Carlos Alberto Parreira, who coached Brazil to a fourth World Cup victory in 1994, has lost his job with struggling Fluminense after a poor showing in the Rio-Sao Paulo Tournament.

Parreira was hired one year ago, and vowed to lift the sleeping giant from the depths of the third division. He managed to win promotion, but the renaissance was not rapid enough for impatient club directors.

Parreira came under fire when his limited squad struggled against top-class opposition in the Rio-Sao Paulo tournament, losing all but one of their group games.

By last week Parreira had clearly lost the support of club president David Fischel. His resignation was confirmed, following a late night meeting between the two men.

Fluminense named Waldyr Espinosa as the club's new coach.

Parreira's teams tend to defy the cavalier image of Brazilian football and not for the first time in his career, it was this style — as much as results — that drew criticism.

"Fluminense are playing horizontally, with two many sideways passes... I want a team that goes for goal," said Fischel, days before Parreira fell.

Parreira is unlikely to be short of job opportunities. Last year he turned down offers from several clubs in Brazil's success-hungry elite.

At the time, Parreira insisted he would fulfil his promise to take Fluminense back to the top flight.

With confirmation of his resignation, Rio de Janeiro's newspapers immediately linked his name with the city's two biggest clubs, Flamengo and Vasco da Gama.

Carlos Parreira: Lost support.

REFS ANGER CAPELLO

Roma coach Fabio Capello accused Italy's referees of treating players and coaches like naughty school-children.

Capello was dismissed from the bench in the 82nd minute of his side's 2-2 draw at Perugia for complaining about a corner kick awarded to the home side. Perugia scored their equaliser from the kick to deny Roma victory.

Roma also had captain Francesco Totti sent off for pushing referee Gennaro Borriello during an argument about a Perugia defensive wall breaching the 10-metre rule.

"Referees treat us like children," Capello complained.

"I don't understand why every Sunday we have to hold out our hands to be caned."

Television replays showed Totti gave Borriello a gentle shove in the chest after being booked for dissent in the 20th minute. He was immediately dismissed.

Fabio Capello: No respect.

"The sending off was an over-reaction," Capello said. "Totti went up to him (Borriello) to ask him to make the wall keep its distance. He can do that. He's the team captain.

"After the yellow card he told the ref that every Sunday he's made to take freekicks with the wall just five metres away.

He touched the referee's arm but it was nothing much."

Capello said his own dismissal was equally unfair.

"I told the linesman that the corner he had just given didn't exist... The only answer I got was a dismissal," the former AC Milan and Real Madrid coach said.

"We have to respect referees but at the same time they have to respect us and not treat us like kids," he said.

ARSENAL BOSS SAYS CLUB BEFORE COUNTRY

Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger is ready to upset several international coaches as he puts his fading Premier League club's fortunes ahead of other commitments.

Arsenal fell to a 1-0 defeat by Liverpool at Highbury recently which allowed fellow Frenchman Gerard Houllier's side to leapfrog the Londoners into third place.

The result also left Arsenal nine points adrift of leaders Manchester United and Wenger has conceded the title is beyond his team.

Their campaign has been badly hit by the absence of several key players including Nwankwo Kanu who has not played for Arsenal since January 9 as he has been on international duty for Nigeria in the African Nations Cup.

He has also badly missed centre back Tony Adams who has missed six matches with a toe injury.

Wenger is determined all his resources are available as Arsenal continue their push for one of three Champions League places and, if necessary, will advise players to skip international friendlies to support the club cause.

Arsene Wenger

Wenger reacted angrily when it was suggested Adams could return to England duty before Arsenal when Argentina visit Wembley for a friendly on February 23.

He said: "We live in a crazy world but not one in which players play for their national team without having played for their club.

"It's just not acceptable that Adams could play for England without having played for Arsenal. So there's no chance of him joining up if he is picked — especially for a friendly game."

Wenger's stance could extend to Dutchmen Dennis Bergkamp and Marc Overmars who have indicated they are ready to withdraw from Netherlands' friendly with Germany next week after both making comebacks from injury.

The Arsenal boss would also be unhappy if Emmanuel Petit and Patrick Vieira risk knee injuries in a French friendly against Poland in Paris on February 23.

The Gunners are still in the UEFA Cup after failing to qualify for the second group stage of the Champions League.

They face a demanding tie against Deportivo Coruna in two weeks for a place in the UEFA Cup quarter-finals. Parma are likely to await the victors.

Van Nistelrooy wants English move

Dutch top scorer Ruud van Nistelrooy has said he would prefer a move to England if, as seems increasingly likely, he leaves PSV Eindhoven at the end of the season.

"If I were to leave, then I'd go to England," he said, adding Italian and Spanish clubs could effectively rule themselves out of the race for this signature.

His club are sticking to an official line that the player, who is contracted until 2003, is not for sale.

However, in a further move to drive the rumour mill, they have hired Italian agent Giovanni Branchini to assess the transfer fee Van Nistelrooy would command if an Italian club were interested.

"That's the standard-setting market. If a club there were willing to pay, say 100 million guilders (about $60 million), then we would know, and an English club, if they were interested, would have to come up with that amount," the club spokesman said.

Van Nistelrooy: English move imminent.

He added Arsenal, Chelsea, Manchester United and Liverpool had all expressed interest, some by visiting PSV, although none had formally approached the Eindhoven side.

PSV have an arrangement with Van Nistelrooy that if a so-called dream club were to express interest, PSV would be prepared to talk.

Last week, the smart money appeared to be on Chelsea launching an English national record 20 million pound ($50 million) bid. The Premier League side said some of the management team had watched Van Nistelrooy in action, but dismissed suggestions that a deal was imminent.

The 23-year-old has scored 27 goals so far this season, but has only netted once for the national side in nine appearances.

UEFA name Euro 2000 Refs

This year's European championship in Belgium and the Netherlands will be controlled by a hand-picked group of 13 referees rather than the 24 who were involved in Euro 96, UEFA said last week.

UEFA issued their list of 12 European appointees — eight of whom were referees in the 1998 World Cup — and will add one African official as part of the co-operation programme between the two Confederations which has seen Europeans officiating in the last two editions of the African Nations Cup.

UEFA said they had decided to select the smaller group to try to ensure the best possible handling of matches as well as a uniform application of the laws.

Four years ago only seven of the 24 chosen referees handled more than one fixture, whereas in this year's tournament all the selected officials should have control of several games.

Another change in approach will see all the officials grouped together at a base near Brussels during the tournament.

Previously, the officials were flown in from their own countries for specific matches.

Between now and the June 10-July 2 tournament none of the selected referees will be allowed to take charge of any games involving any of the 16 finalists.

UEFA have also appointed 16 assistant referees, plus one from Africa, as well as four fourth officials for the tournament.

APPOINTED REFEREES

Guenter Benko (Austria)
Pierluigi Collina (Italy)
Hugh Dallas (Scotland)
Andreas Frisk (Sweden)
Jose Maria Garcia Aranda (Spain)
Dick Jol (Netherlands)
Urs Meier (Switzerland)
Vitor Manuel Melo Pereira (Portugal)
Markus Merk (Germany)
Kim Milton Nielsen (Denmark)
Graham Poll (England)
Gilles Veissiere (France).
Plus one to be appointed by the Confederation of African Football.

RONALDO BACK IN TRAINING

Brazil striker Ronaldo has returned to training for the first time since a knee operation in November, his club Inter Milan said last week.

An Inter spokesman said Ronaldo began a programme of light individual training at the club's Appiano Gentile training complex last week.

"His recovery from the operation is going according to plan and we have started the second phase of recuperation," said the spokesman, "He started with some slow running and the training will gradually intensify."

Ronaldo: Back.

The spokesman added that Ronaldo was expected to begin full training with the rest of the squad in the first week of March.

A month after that the club hoped he would be ready to return to action in Serie A for the first time since he damaged his knee against Lecce on November 21.

"We hope that he will be ready to play in the first week of April," said the spokesman, "That is the plan and at the moment everything is going according to the plan."

Newcastle flood transfer list

English Premier League Newcastle United placed 13 players on the transfer list last week as manager Bobby Robson continued his rebuilding.

The club's website said the 13 included Croatia international Silvio Maric, who said in August he wanted to return to his homeland, and midfielder Stephen Glass, who also wants to leave.

Goalkeepers John Karelse, Ruud Gullit's last signing, and Lionel Perez, who has not played since his move from neighbouring Sunderland, are also listed. The other nine were fringe squad players and reserves.

Robson took over as manager from Dutchman Gullit in September and has guided the north-eastern club away from the relegation zone.

SPURS SIGN YOUNG SWEDE

Swedish international youth player Jonathan Partin has signed a two-year contract with English Premier League club Tottenham Hotspur, Swedish media reported last week.

Partin, 17, who has played eight times for Sweden schoolboys and is said to be one of the brightest propects in Swedish soccer, has been training with Tottenham's under-19 squad.

Before the winter break, he was playing for Swedish second division side Edsbyn IF. The reported transfer fee was a modest 300,000 Swedish crowns ($50,000).

Partin becomes the fifth young player signed by Spurs in the last five weeks following the moves of Matthew Etherington, 18, and Simon Davies, 20, from Peterborough; Anthony Gardner, 19, from Port Vale and Dave McEwen, a 22-year-old striker from non-League Dulwich Hamlet.

THE BETTING

ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE

Manchester United	$1.45
Leeds	$5.00
Liverpool	$7.50
Arsenal	$10.00
Chelsea	$26.00

EURO 2000

Holland	$5.00
Italy	$6.50
Spain	$7.00
France	$8.00
Germany	$9.00
England	$13.00
Czech Republic	$17.00
Sweden	$17.00
Yugoslavia	$26.00
Norway	$26.00
Portugal	$26.00
Romania	$26.00
Belgium	$26.00
Denmark	$51.00
Turkey	$67.00
Slovenia	$126.00

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Barcelona	$3.50
Lazio	$4.00
Man United	$5.50
Chelsea	$8.00
Real Madrid	$10.00
Bayern Munich	$12.00
Fiorentina	$15.00
Valencia	$21.00
Porto	$26.00
Bordeaux	$81.00
Rosenborg	$81.00
Feyenoord	$101.00
Hertha	$101.00
Marseille	$151.00
Dynamo Kiev	$151.00
Sparta Prague	$501.00

UEFA CUP

Juventus	$5.00
Parma	$7.50
Arsenal	$8.00
Roma	$8.00
Leeds	$12.00
Dep La Coruna	$15.00
Borussia Dortmund	$15.00
Monaco	$17.00
Celta Vigo	$17.00
Atletico Madrid	$21.00
Real Mallorca	$21.00
Galatasaray	$26.00
Udinese	$26.00
Werder Bremen	$34.00
Lens	$41.00
Slavia Prague	$51.00

FA CUP 2000

Chelsea	$2.50
Newcastle	$4.25
Everton	$6.00
Aston Villa	$6.50
Charlton	$13.00
Bolton	$21.00
Tranmere Rovers	$21.00
Gillingham	$101.00

INTERNET COULD GIVEN EURO CLUBS $1 BILLION

The internet could provide $1 billion in new revenue for Europe's top soccer clubs within the next 10 years, an expert told European soccer's governing body, UEFA, last week.

Looking for new revenue sources to help finance the Champions League and other competitions, UEFA spent the second day of a two-day clubs workshop at its lavish headquarters on the shore of Lake Geneva exploring new avenues of income.

Chief among them was the relatively untapped internet market, which consultant Mark Oliver says could eventually be worth as much as $2 to $3 billion.

"In 10 years time there will be an extra $1 billion for European football and most of that will go to the top clubs as well," said Oliver, who has also done similar work for the English Premier League. "That money will come from some betting, merchandising and access to income streams.

"You add it all up, what sports fans might spend, and you come to a market that could eventually be $2 to $3 billion.

"But about half of that comes from existing revenues, it's just a matter of switching it from bricks and mortar to online and new media.

"It's not all new money."

Like everyone else trying to earn money from the internet, it will be some time before UEFA will be able to cash in.

European soccer's governing body said it had retained its internet rights but has not yet looked into negotiating them on a separate basis.

"Who owns it once it becomes valuable will be one of the big questions," added Oliver. "Negotiating internet rights can be done separately at the moment but the more it starts to show up on television, the more difficult that will become."

UEFA general secretary Gerhard Aigner said he believed UEFA should approach the internet in much the same way it negotiates television rights, where the majority of the games are available on public television.

"The consumer must remain interested and not over-fed," said Aigner. "There must be an intelligent concept to be used to bring specific presentations to a specific public.

"We want to remain with the major part of the games on free television and then there is the internet which is becoming very interesting.

"There is a whole package that has to be put in place and wrapped up with intelligence and not simply to make more money.

"So if we are intelligent I think the game goes towards good times.

"And we have to use the same intelligence when preparing a calendar."

A co-ordinated universal calendar was the primary point of discussion during the first day of meetings.

Europe's top clubs brought their complaints to UEFA about losing players to international duty, demanding UEFA push for a universal calendar that fits their needs.

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SPANISH HOTEL EJECTS LEICESTER

Troubled striker Stan Collymore was accused last week of letting off a fire extinguisher in an incident that led to Leicester City players being thrown out of their Spanish training centre at La Manga.

The Premier League club arrived on the Costa Del Sol for a four-day stay as part of their build-up for the League Cup final against Tranmere Rovers on February 27.

But the party were returning to Leicester the following day after a series of incidents that ended in a hotel bar being damaged. According to Tony Coles, managing director of the complex at La Manga, Collymore was responsible for a fire extinguisher being let off in the bar.

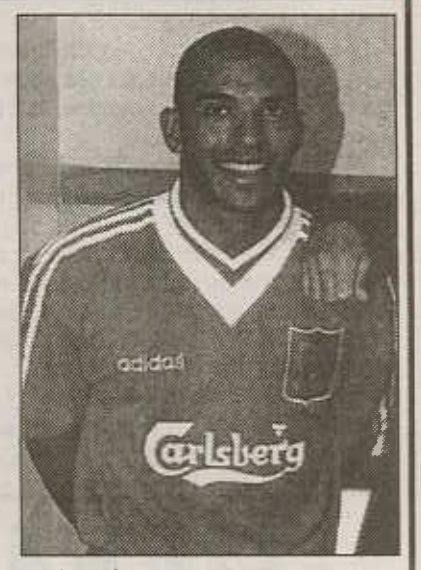
Coles told the Leicester Mercury: "We have had over 250 teams visit our soccer centre since it was opened in 1998 and we have never had any problems whatsoever.

"We were looking forward to the arrival of Leicester City who are doing great things in the Premier League.

"So it is extremely regrettable that on the first evening they were here, when they were clearly enjoying themselves, it resulted in one of the players, Stan Collymore, letting off a fire extinguisher in a public bar which is totally unacceptable behaviour.

"As a consequence, after discussions with the management, we demanded the team leave."

Collymore joined Leicester last week after a difficult three-year spell at Aston Villa, during which time he underwent treatment for clinical depression.



Stan Collymore: Unacceptable behaviour.

Leicester manager Martin O'Neill had not travelled to Spain with the squad but was due to have linked up with them the following morning.

In a statement Leicester "unreservedly apologised" for any embarrassment or inconvenience caused to guests at the resort.

The statement added the club would be launching an internal investigation, and would "severely reprimand any individual, or individuals, found to have breached club discipline".

I'LL QUIT – OVERMARS

Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger's problems increased last week when Dutch winger Marc Overmars hinted he would quit the English Premier League club unless they qualified for the European Champions League.

Arsenal's title challenge was dealt a severe blow when they lost 1-0 at home to Liverpool and slipped to fourth place in the table.

Overmars reacted to the on-field slump by saying: "I may not be an Arsenal player next season. That will be decided by what happens on the pitch.

"I am used to winning something every season. I want to win the Champions League. I want to play well in the best period of my career. I'm 26 and probably have four good years left," he said.

The Liverpool defeat prompted Wenger to say he would run the risk of upsetting several coaches of national sides by advising his players to skip international friendlies.

Arsenal's campaign has been badly hit by the absence of key players, including Nwankwo Kanu who has not played for his club since January 9. He has been playing for Nigeria in the African Nations' Cup.

Marc Overmars: Needs success.

NEW ERA BECKONS FOR CAMEROON

Cameroon are back with a vengeance after ending years in the doldrums with their African Nations Cup final victory over Nigeria in a penalty shoot-out.

That achievement has finally persuaded Cameroon's players they can fulfil the promise they showed 10 years ago.

The Indomitable Lions have flattered to deceive since 1990, when the memorable team led by Roger Milla became the first African country to reach a World Cup quarter-final.

More recently, they have earned more headlines for administrative chaos than the entertaining football which captured the world's imagination in Italy.

Although Cameroon have reached the last two World Cups, they failed to win a game at either, picked up red cards galore and were plagued by internal bickering.

"Cameroon football has been relaunched," said captain Rigobert Song, who fired the winning penalty in the shootout after a Nigerian effort was ruled out although TV replays suggested it had crossed the line.

"We have shown that we are a team of exceptional quality, and we have given Cameroon football its confidence back," he added.

"Today's generation has made history because we are really a solid team."

His optimism appears justified. Song and Raymond Kalla, previously prone to red cards, emerged as the tournament's best defensive partnership.

Rigobert Song: Cameroon captain.

Teenage striker Samuel Eto'o, a reserve at Real Madrid, made his mark in style with four goals, the same tally as his fellow striker Patrick Mboma.

Laurent Mayer, who was raised in Spain, had an outstanding tournament playing wide on the right while Real Madrid's Geremi Fotso Njitap and West Ham's tough-tackling Marc-Vivien Foe won numerous midfield battles.

Song, captain at 23, illustrates the way the team is maturing. After becoming the first player in history to be sent off in two World Cups in 1994 and 1998, he has managed to tame his urge for wild tackles.

He is now the kingpin of a team which under Frenchman Pierre Lechantre has managed to combine physical strength, deft ball control and tactical discipline.

Lechantre, assistant to compatriot Claude Le Roy at the last World Cup before being handed the reins, is as confident as his captain.

He said: "Cameroon have found a great team that I am sure will go far from here. I think we have a fantastic group, they are a balanced team and they always respond to my appeals.

"Our objective must be to avoid euphoria and continue working," Lechantre said.

Cameroon begin their World Cup qualifying campaign in April with a one-off match at home to Somalia. The away leg in Mogadishu was scrapped for safety reasons.

After that, they will contest a group of four from which only the winners will qualify for the 2002 World Cup.

MATTHAUS TO BREAK RECORD

Lothar Matthaus is expected to earn a record 144th cap when Germany play the Netherlands in a friendly this week.

Germany head coach Erich Ribbeck included the 38-year-old Bayern Munich libero in a 19-man squad for the match in Amsterdam on February 23.

Lothar Matthaus

Matthaus won a world record-equalling 143rd cap in a 1-0 win over Norway last November, joining former Sweden goalkeeper Thomas Ravelli.

The captain of Germany's 1990 World Cup-winning team is expected to end his international career after the European championship finals in Belgium and the Netherlands beginning on June 10.

The only new face in Ribbeck's squad is VfL Wolfsburg midfielder Zoltan Sebescen.

AC Milan striker Oliver Bierhoff is expected to captain the side.

RIVER NAME NEW COACH

Former Argentina midfielder Americo Gallego was named coach of champions River Plate for a second time last week.

He replaced Ramon Diaz who quit in a dispute over signings.

Gallego, World Cup winner in 1978, guided River Plate to the Apertura championship in 1994.

"River is going to play as it did when I was a player, and as it did when I coached the team in 1994. We're going to push forward all the time and be on the offensive," said Gallego, who played for River from 1981 to 1988.

"Only players who are physically 100 percent are going to play for me. If not, it's no go," he said.

He was named coach of Real Betis last year, but was sent home before he could start because he did not have the minimum three years' experience required under Spanish league rules.

He served as assistant to former Argentina coach Daniel Passarella until 1997, but has had no coaching work since.

Diaz, the most successful coach in River Plate's history, will be a hard act to follow. Under his leadership, the side won four local championships and one South American title.

Diaz resigned after falling out with the management. He said they had broken promises to buy players.

IZZET TO MAKE DEBUT

Leicester City midfielder Muzzy Izzet expects to make his debut for Turkey in a friendly against the Czech Republic in April.

London-born Izzet pledged his international future to Turkey after weekend talks with national coach Can Cobanoglu and the Turkish ambassador.

"We spoke for an hour after Leicester's (Premier League) game with Watford and sorted everything out," Izzet said.

"My father was born in Turkey and he's over the moon about it."

Muzzy Izzet

Izzet, who is applying for Turkish citizenship, had twice turned down offers to play for Turkey in the hope of breaking into the England squad. But he admits the prospect of playing in the European championship finals this summer helped make up his mind.

"It's a great opportunity for me and now that everything has been sorted out I'm really looking forward to it," he said.

TV GUIDE

*** All times are Australian Eastern Standard Summer Time**

Tuesday February 22
Futbol Mundial
SBS TV
4pm - 4.30pm

Best Of English Soccer
Optus Vision (C7 Sport 12)
5pm-6pm

Wednesday February 23
National Soccer League
Auckland v Newcastle
Optus Vision (C7 Sport 12)
1.30pm-3.00pm

English FA Cup
4th Rnd Review
Fox Sports
10pm - 11.30pm

European Soccer Show
Optus Vision (C7 Sport 12)
10pm-11pm

Thursday February 24
International Friendly
Australia v Hungary (LIVE)
SBS-TV
6am-9am

International Friendly
Netherlands v Germany (LIVE)
Optus Vision (ESPN)
6.25am-8.30am

Scottish Premier League
Celtic v Rangers (LIVE)
Fox Sports
6.30am - 9am

Spanish Primera Liga
Teams TBA
Fox Sports
8.30pm - 10.30pm

Soccer Central
Optus Vision (C7 Sport 12)
9pm-10pm

Friday February 25
Spanish Primera Liga (REPLAY)
Fox Sports 2
10am - 12pm

German Bundesliga
Optus Vision (C7 Sport 13)
3.30pm-5.30pm

Soccer Scene
Fox Sports
5.30pm - 6.30pm

National Soccer League
Parramatta v Brisbane (LIVE)
Optus Vision (C7 Sport 12)
7.30pm-9.30pm

Saturday February 26
English First Division
Charlton v Wolverhampton
Optus Vision (C7 Sport 13)
10am-12pm

Soccer Scene
Fox Sports 2
1pm - 2pm

French Premier League
Optus Vision (C7 Sport 13)
1.30pm-3.30pm

Scottish Premier league
Celtic v Rangers (REPLAY)
Fox Sports 2
2pm - 4pm

UEFA Champions League
SBS TV
3.30pm - 4.30pm

World Soccer
SBS TV
4.30pm - 5.30pm

English Premier League (REPLAY)
SBS TV
5.30pm - 6.30pm

English Premier League Review
Fox Sports
1.30am - 2am
(Sunday Morning)

English Premier League
Teams TBA (LIVE)
2am - 4am
(Sunday Morning)

Scottish Premier league
Celtic v Rangers (REPLAY)
Fox Sports
4am - 6am
(Sunday Morning)

Sunday February 27
Italian Serie A Highlights
SBS TV
10.30am - 11.30am

On The Ball
SBS TV
11.30am - 12.30pm

English Premier League
Fox Sports
2.30pm - 4.30pm

Dutch First Division
FC Den Bosch v Ajax (LIVE)
Optus Vision (ESPN)
12.25am-2.30am
(Monday Morning)

English Worthington Cup (LIVE)
Fox Sports
1am - 4.30am
(Monday Morning)

Monday February 28
English Worthington Cup (REPLAY)
Fox Sports 2
8am - 10am
(Monday Morning)

Tuesday February 29
English Premier League
Teams TBA (LIVE)
Fox Sports
6am - 9.30am

ABSW

WORLD

Excludes Monday games

ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE

Leeds United 0 Manchester United 1, Middlesbrough 2 Coventry City 0.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Manchester Utd	**25**	**17**	**5**	**3**	**57**	**31**	**56**
2. Leeds United	25	16	2	7	39	29	50
3. Liverpool	25	14	5	6	38	21	47
4. Arsenal	25	13	5	7	43	26	44
5. Chelsea	25	12	7	6	35	23	43
6. Sunderland	25	11	6	8	41	36	39
7. Aston Villa	25	10	7	8	30	23	37
8. Everton	25	9	9	7	42	35	36
9. Tottenham Hotspur	25	10	5	10	34	29	35
10. West Ham United	24	9	8	7	34	31	35
11. Leicester City	25	10	5	10	35	36	35
12. Coventry City	25	8	8	9	35	31	32
13. Newcastle United	25	8	7	10	44	41	31
14. Middlesbrough	25	9	4	12	27	37	31
15. Southampton	24	8	5	11	29	38	29
16. Wimbledon	25	6	10	9	35	43	28
17. Derby County	25	6	6	13	27	38	24
18. Bradford City	25	6	6	13	25	41	24
19. Sheff Wed	25	4	5	16	23	51	17
20. Watford	25	4	3	18	22	55	15

LEADING SCORERS

22 - Kevin Phillips (Sunderland)

16 - Alan Shearer (Newcastle United), Andy Cole (Manchester United)

12 - Michael Bridges (Leeds United), Kevin Campbell (Everton), Paolo Di Canio (West Ham United)

11 - Dwight Yorke (Manchester United), Robbie Keane (Coventry City)

9 - Dion Dublin (Aston Villa), Steffen Iversen (Tottenham Hotspur), Tony Cottee (Leicester City), Tore Andre Flo (Chelsea), Niall Quinn (Sunderland)

8 - John Hartson (Wimbledon), Davor Suker (Arsenal), Thierry Henry (Arsenal), Marians Pahars (Southampton)

7 - Muzzy Izzet (Leicester City), Nwankwo Kanu (Arsenal), Brian Deane (Middlesbrough), Michael Owen (Liverpool), Tim Sherwood (Tottenham Hotspur), Carl Cort (Wimbledon), Gary McAllister (Coventry City), Marcus Gayle (Wimbledon), Titi Camara (Liverpool), Hamilton Ricard (Middlesbrough)

6 - Rory Delap (Derby County), Titi Camara (Liverpool), Francis Jeffers (Everton), Emile Heskey (Leicester City), Patrik Berger (Liverpool), Gilles de Bilde (Sheffield Wednesday), Gustavo Poyet (Chelsea), Harry Kewell (Leeds United), Duncan Ferguson (Everton), Trevor Sinclair (West Ham United), Frank Lampard (West Ham United).

NATIONWIDE LEAGUE DIV ONE

Barnsley 1 QPR 1, Crewe 1 Ipswich 2, Fulham 2 Walsall 0, Norwich 3 Grimsby 0, Nottm Forest 2 Crystal Palace 0, Sheff Utd 6 West Brom 0, Stockport 0 Blackburn 1, Swindon 1 Birmingham 4.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
1. Charlton	**31**	**21**	**5**	**5**	**58**	**29**	**68**
2. Ipswich	32	18	9	5	54	31	63
3. Man City	31	19	5	7	51	25	62
4. Barnsley	32	17	6	9	62	47	57
5. Birmingham	32	15	8	9	49	36	53
6. Huddersfield	32	15	7	10	49	35	52
7. Wolverhampton	32	13	10	9	44	36	49
8. Fulham	32	12	12	8	29	26	48
9. Blackburn	31	11	11	9	37	34	44
10. QPR	32	10	13	9	41	38	43
11. Stockport	32	11	10	11	36	43	43
12. Bolton	30	11	9	10	40	34	42
13. Sheff Utd	32	11	9	12	46	46	42
14. Norwich	31	11	9	11	32	34	42
15. Grimsby	32	11	7	14	36	52	40
16. Tranmere	31	10	7	14	40	47	37
17. Crystal Palace	32	9	10	13	44	52	37
18. Nottm Forest	32	9	9	14	35	40	36
19. West Brom	32	6	15	11	26	40	33
20. Portsmouth	31	7	9	15	35	46	30
21. Walsall	32	7	9	16	33	51	30
22. Crewe	32	7	8	17	31	44	29
23. Port Vale	30	6	10	14	32	41	28
24. Swindon	32	3	11	18	22	55	20

NATIONWIDE LEAGUE DIV TWO

Brentford 0 Wycombe 0, Bristol City 2 Notts 2, County Burnley 0 Wigan 0, Cambridge 0 Blackpool 2, Colchester 1 Stoke 0, Luton 1 Bristol Rovers 4, Millwall 3 Bournemouth 1, Oxford 2 Chesterfield 1, Preston 1 Bury 1, Scunthorpe 2 Reading 2, Wrexham 0 Oldham 3.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Preston	**30**	**18**	**9**	**3**	**54**	**26**	**63**
2. Bristol Rovers	31	19	6	6	51	25	63
3. Wigan	30	15	13	2	49	24	58
4. Millwall	32	16	9	7	47	34	57
5. Burnley	30	15	10	5	41	24	55
6. Stoke	32	14	9	9	42	32	51
7. Notts County	32	14	8	10	47	36	50
8. Gillingham	28	14	7	7	50	34	49
9. Brentford	32	12	9	11	40	41	45
10. Luton	32	12	7	13	44	47	43
11. Bristol City	31	9	15	7	38	34	42
12. Wycombe	31	10	10	11	38	38	40
13. Oldham	31	11	7	13	35	36	40
14. Colchester	32	11	7	14	41	58	40
15. Bury	29	9	12	8	43	37	39
16. Bournemouth	32	11	6	15	43	49	39
17. Reading	31	7	12	12	39	50	33
18. Scunthorpe	31	7	10	14	30	48	31
19. Wrexham	31	7	10	14	30	48	31
20. Oxford	31	8	7	16	27	47	31
21. Blackpool	32	6	10	16	34	52	28
22. Cardiff	30	5	12	13	28	41	27
23. Cambridge	30	5	9	16	36	47	24
24. Chesterfield	31	4	10	17	18	37	22

NATIONWIDE LEAGUE DIV THREE

Barnet 0 Peterborough 2, Darlington 1 Southend 0, Hartlepool 1 Macclesfield 4, Hull City 0 Shrewsbury 0, Leyton Orient 1 Cheltenham 0, Mansfield 0 Halifax 2, Northampton 1 Brighton 1, Plymouth 0 York 0, Rochdale 1 Lincoln 1, Rotherham 4 Carlisle 2, Torquay 1 Exeter 0.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Rotherham	**32**	**19**	**6**	**7**	**54**	**23**	**63**
2. Swansea	31	18	6	7	35	21	60
3. Darlington	31	16	9	6	45	23	57
4. Barnet	32	16	8	8	45	36	56
5. Northampton	31	15	7	9	40	28	52
6. Peterborough	30	15	6	9	42	37	51
7. Rochdale	31	14	8	9	35	27	50
8. Hartlepool	32	15	4	13	42	37	49
9. Macclesfield	32	14	6	12	47	42	48
10. Torquay	31	13	8	10	44	35	47
11. Plymouth	30	12	11	7	39	31	47
12. Halifax	32	13	7	12	34	37	46
13. Mansfield	32	13	6	13	40	41	45
14. Cheltenham	31	12	7	12	31	30	43
15. Hull City	31	10	10	11	30	28	40
16. Southend	32	11	7	14	43	49	40
17. Lincoln	30	10	9	11	46	49	39
18. Brighton	32	9	10	13	40	38	37
19. Leyton Orient	32	10	7	15	33	38	37
20. Exeter	32	8	7	17	34	54	31
21. York	32	7	9	16	29	46	30
22. Shrewsbury	31	7	8	16	24	42	29
23. Carlisle	30	5	7	18	28	53	22
24. Chester	32	5	5	22	28	63	20

FA CUP QUARTER-FINALS

Tranmere (I) 2 Newcastle United 3, Chelsea 5 Gillingham (II) 0, Everton 1 Aston Villa 2, Bolton (I) 1 Charlton (I) 0

SCOTTISH PREMIER LEAGUE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Rangers	**21**	**16**	**4**	**1**	**57**	**17**	**52**
2. Celtic	21	14	2	5	59	20	44
3. Motherwell	21	8	8	5	32	35	32
4. Dundee Utd	21	9	4	8	25	33	31
5. Hibernian	22	6	9	7	34	37	27
6. Hearts	20	7	5	8	31	30	26
7. Dundee	21	7	2	12	24	33	23
8. St Johnstone	21	5	7	9	21	27	22
9. Aberdeen	21	4	4	13	23	62	16
10. Kilmarnock	21	2	9	10	19	31	15

SCOTTISH LEAGUE DIV ONE

Dunfermline 1 St Mirren 1.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. St Mirren	**25**	**15**	**6**	**4**	**54**	**29**	**51**
2. Dunfermline	26	13	10	3	46	25	49
3. Falkirk	26	14	5	7	45	33	47
4. Livingston	23	12	6	5	42	28	42
5. Raith	24	12	6	6	42	29	42
6. Inverness CT	25	8	8	9	40	38	32
7. Ayr	25	8	5	12	29	35	29
8. G Morton	25	6	6	13	37	46	24
9. Airdrie	25	5	6	14	18	49	21
10. Clydebank	24	0	4	20	14	55	4

SCOTTISH LEAGUE DIV TWO

Arbroathv Alloa Hamilton (postponed), Stenhousemuir Stirling 3 Ross County 1.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Clyde	**22**	**12**	**6**	**4**	**35**	**19**	**42**
2. Partick	23	9	6	8	28	27	33
3. Ross County	22	9	5	8	25	24	32
4. Alloa	19	7	10	2	24	19	31
5. Stirling	24	9	4	11	45	44	31
6. Arbroath	23	7	10	6	34	34	31
7. Stranraer	23	6	12	5	30	25	30
8. Stenhousemuir	22	7	5	10	29	32	26
9. Hamilton	23	6	8	9	25	30	26
10. Queen of South	23	5	4	14	30	51	19

SCOTTISH LEAGUE DIV THREE

Albion 3 East Fife 1, Cowdenbeath 1 Brechin 1, Montrose 0 East Stirling 0, Queens Park 3 Forfar 2.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Queens Park	**25**	**12**	**8**	**5**	**38**	**29**	**44**
2. Forfar	23	11	8	4	47	28	41
3. Cowdenbeath	25	11	6	8	40	26	39
4. Berwick	22	10	7	5	32	18	37
5. East Fife	23	11	4	8	28	27	37
6. Dumbarton	23	10	4	9	38	37	34
7. Montrose	24	7	5	12	25	36	26
8. East Stirling	23	7	5	11	17	28	26
9. Brechin	23	6	4	13	28	38	22
10. Albion	23	4	5	14	23	49	17

SCOTTISH FA CUP ROUND 4

Inverness C.Thistle (I) 1 Aberdeen 1, Motherwell 2 Arbroath (II) 0, Alloa (II) 2 Dundee United 2, Berwick (III) 0 Falkirk (I) 0, Clyde (II) 0 Hearts 2, Greenock Morton (I) 0 Rangers 1, Hibernian 1 Clydebank (I) 1, Partick Thistle (II) 2 Livingston (I) 1.

ITALIAN SERIE A

AC Milan 2 Lazio 1, Lecce 1 Bologna 1, Piacenza 1 Inter Milan 3, Torino 1 Cagliari 1, Udinese 5 Bari 1, Venezia 0 Juventus 4, Verona 4 Parma 3, AS Roma 4 Fiorentina 0, Reggina 1 Perugia 1.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Juventus	**22**	**13**	**8**	**1**	**31**	**10**	**47**
2. AC Milan	22	12	8	2	48	28	44
3. Lazio	22	12	7	3	41	21	43
4. AS Roma	22	12	6	4	48	23	42
5. Inter Milan	22	12	4	6	41	20	40
6. Parma	22	9	7	6	34	26	34
7. Udinese	22	9	6	7	38	30	33
8. Lecce	22	7	7	8	22	30	28
9. Bologna	22	7	6	9	19	23	27
10. Fiorentina	22	6	9	7	22	28	27
11. Bari	22	7	6	9	26	34	27
12. Perugia	22	7	4	11	22	40	25
13. Torino	22	5	8	9	22	30	23
14. Reggina	22	4	10	8	20	29	22
15. Verona	22	5	6	11	22	35	21
16. Venezia	22	5	4	13	20	39	19
17. Cagliari	22	2	10	10	20	34	16
18. Piacenza	22	3	6	13	12	28	15

LEADING SCORERS

16 - Andriy Shevchenko (AC Milan)

15 - Vincenzo Montella (AS Roma)

14 - Hernan Crespo (Parma)

12 - Gabriel Batistuta (Fiorentina)

12 - Christian Vieri (Inter Milan), Filippo Inzaghi (Juventus), Cristiano Lucarelli (Lecce)

11 - Oliver Bierhoff (Milan)

10 - Marcelo Salas (Lazio), Marco Ferrante (Torino), Roberto Muzzi (Udinese)

9 - Marco Delvecchio (Roma)

8 - Giuseppe Signori (Bologna), Mohamed Kallon (Reggina)

7 - Francesco Totti (Roma), Filippo Maniero (Venezia)

6 - Patrick Mboma (Cagliari), Zvonimir Boban (AC Milan),Renato Olive (Perugia), Martin Joergensen (Udinese)

5 - Daniele Berretta (Cagliari), Alvaro Recoba (Inter), Alessandro Del Piero (Juventus), Sebastian Veron and Sinisa Mihajlovic (Lazio), Stefano Fiore and Andrea Sottil (Udinese), Maurizio Ganz (Venezia), Adailton and Domenico Morfeo (Verona)

GERMAN BUNDESLIGA

VfL Wolfsburg 2 Arminia Bielefeld 0, SSV Ulm 1 Hansa Rostock1, VfB Stuttgart 0 SpVgg Unterhaching 2, Kaiserslautern 4 Werder Bremen 3, SC Freiburg 1 Borussia Dortmund1, Eintracht Frankfurt 3 TSV 1860 Munich1, Bayern Munich 4 MSV Duisburg 1, Hertha Berlin 2 Hamburg SV 1, Schalke 04 1 Bayer Leverkusen 1.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Bayern Munich	**21**	**14**	**4**	**3**	**43**	**15**	**46**
2. Bayer Leverkusen	21	11	8	2	35	23	41
3. Hamburg SV	21	10	8	3	46	23	38
4. Kaiserslautern	21	10	3	8	30	36	33
5. Werder Bremen	21	9	5	7	44	33	32
6. TSV 1860 Munich	21	9	5	7	33	30	32
7. VfL Wolfsburg	21	8	7	6	28	32	31
8. Hertha Berlin	21	8	7	6	28	33	31
9. Borussia Dortmund	21	7	9	5	26	17	30
10. Schalke 04	21	6	10	5	28	26	28
11. VfB Stuttgart	21	8	3	10	23	27	27
12. SpVgg Unter.	21	7	5	9	21	24	26
13. SC Freiburg	21	6	6	9	28	29	24
14. SSV Ulm	21	6	6	9	24	29	24
15. Hansa Rostock	21	5	8	8	27	40	23
16. Eintracht Frankfurt	21	6	2	13	25	31	20

WORLD

Excludes Monday games

16. Eintracht Frankfurt	21	6	2	13	25	31	20
17. MSV Duisburg	21	3	7	11	23	40	16
18. Arminia Bielefeld	21	2	5	14	15	39	11

LEADING SCORERS

10 - Ebbe Sand (Schalke 04)

9 - Ailton (Werder Bremen), Michael Preetz (Hertha Berlin), Adel Sellimi (SC Freiburg), Tony Yeboah (Hamburg SV)

8 - Stefan Beinlich, Ulf Kirsten, (Bayer Leverkusen), Marco Bode (Werder Bremen), Hans-Joerg Butt (Hamburg SV), Youri Djorkaeff (Kaiserslautern), Elber, Paulo Sergio (both Bayern Munich) Martin Max (TSV 1860 Munich)

SPANISH PRIMERA LIGA

Atletico Madrid 1 Espanyol 1, Barcelona 4 Valladolid 0, Malaga 3 Numancia 1, Rayo Vallecano 1 Racing Santander 2, Real Mallorca 1 Celta Vigo 0, Real Oviedo 1 Real Betis 1, Real Sociedad 2 Real Zaragoza 1, Sevilla 2 Alaves 2, Valencia 1 Real Madrid 1, Deportivo Coruna 2 Athletic Bilbao 0.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Deportivo Coruna	**25**	**14**	**4**	**7**	**44**	**31**	**46**
2. Barcelona	25	12	5	8	48	31	41
3. Real Zaragoza	25	10	10	5	42	27	40
4. Real Madrid	25	10	10	5	41	38	40
5. Alaves	25	11	6	8	29	27	39
6. Celta Vigo	25	12	2	11	35	31	38
7. Real Mallorca	25	10	6	9	33	32	36
8. Athletic Bilbao	25	9	9	7	35	37	36
9. Valencia	25	9	8	8	33	26	35
10. Rayo Vallecano	25	10	4	11	34	35	34
11. Numancia	25	9	7	9	34	39	34
12. Racing Santander	25	8	8	9	39	36	32
13. Malaga	25	8	8	9	36	34	32
14. Real Betis	25	9	4	12	24	39	31
15. Atletico Madrid	25	8	6	11	38	40	30
16. Espanyol	25	7	8	10	35	37	29
17. Valladolid	25	7	8	10	22	30	29
18. Real Sociedad	25	6	10	9	28	34	28
19. Real Oviedo	25	7	7	11	25	39	28
20. Sevilla	25	4	10	11	28	40	22

LEADING SCORERS

21 - Salva Ballesta (Racing Santander), Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink (Atletico Madrid)

18 - Savo Milosevic (Real Zaragoza)

16 - Catanha (Malaga)

13 - Diego Tristan (Real Mallorca)

12 - Raul Gonzalez (Real Madrid), Roy Makaay (Deportivo Coruna)

11 - Victor Fernandez (Valladolid), Rivaldo (Barcelona)

9 - Gaizka Mendieta (Valencia), Fernando Morientes (Real Madrid), Juan Carlos Gomez (Sevilla)

8 - Ruben Navarro (Numancia), Dani Garcia (Barcelona), Pauleta Resendes (Deportivo Coruna), Dely Valdes (Real Oviedo), Joseba Etxeberria (Athletic Bilbao), Vassilis Tsartas (Sevilla), Djalminha (Deportivo Coruna), Patrick Kluivert (Barcelona)

7 - Miguel Angel Benitez (Espanyol), Luis Figo (Barcelona), Rodrigo Fabri (Valladolid), Juanele Castano (Real Zaragoza), Alfonso Perez (Real Betis), Pacheta Rojo (Numancia)

6 - Valery Karpin (Celta Vigo), Finidi George (Real Betis), Bolo Perez (Rayo Vallecano), Mario Turdo (Celta Vigo), Julio Salinas (Alaves), Manuel Canabal (Rayo Vallecano), Jordi Ferron, (Rayo Vallecano), Turu Flores (Deportivo Coruna), Alexander Mostovoi (Celta Vigo), Oscar de Paula (Real Sociedad), Raul Tamudo (Espanyol)

DUTCH FIRST DIVISION

Utrecht 2 Heerenveen 2, Ajax Amsterdam 2 Graafschap Doetinchem 1, Willem II Tilburg 2 Feyenoord 1, MVV Maastricht 2 Sparta Rotterdam 2, Den Bosch 2 Roda JC Kerkrade 2, NEC Nijmegen 3 RKC Waalwijk 1, PSV Eindhoven 3 Vitesse Arnhem 2.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. PSV Eindhoven	**23**	**17**	**2**	**4**	**71**	**19**	**53**
2. Ajax Amsterdam	22	14	4	4	56	32	46
3. Feyenoord	22	12	7	3	43	26	43
4. Twente Enschede	22	11	9	2	38	21	42
5. Heerenveen	22	13	3	6	41	25	42
6. Vitesse Arnhem	23	11	7	5	45	35	40
7. AZ Alkmaar	22	12	2	8	43	36	38
8. Willem II Tilburg	22	11	4	7	37	39	37
9. Roda JC Kerkrade	21	10	4	7	35	29	34
10. RKC Waalwijk	22	10	2	10	32	42	32
11. Utrecht	22	9	2	11	36	41	34
12. Sparta Rotterdam	22	7	3	12	31	46	24
13. Graafschap Doe	23	4	8	11	27	38	20
14. NEC Nijmegen	22	5	4	13	28	44	19
15. MVV Maastricht	22	4	5	13	29	47	17
16. Fortuna Sittard	22	3	7	12	27	38	16
17. Den Bosch	23	2	6	15	22	58	12
18. Cambuur	21	2	5	14	17	42	11

LEADING SCORERS

28 - Ruud van Nistelrooy (PSV Eindhoven)

20 - Pierre van Hooijdonk (Vitesse Arnhem)

13 - Jan Vennegoor of Hesselink (Twente Enschede)

12 - Richard Knopper (Ajax Amsterdam) Luc Nilis (PSV) Bob Peeters (Roda JC Kerkrade)

11 - Mariano Bombarda (Willem II Tilburg) John Bosman (AZ Alkmaar) Nikos Machlas (Ajax)

BELGIAN FIRST DIVISION

Harelbeke 3 Sint-Truiden 2, Genk 4 Beveren 1, Eendracht Aalst 1 Germinal Beerschot 2, Mechelen 0 Club Bruges 0, Charleroi 1 Verbroedering Geel 3, Westerlo 1 Lommel 0, Anderlecht 5 Lokeren 0, Standard Liege 2 Excelsior Mouscron 0, Ghent 2 Lierse 0.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Anderlecht	**23**	**16**	**6**	**1**	**62**	**23**	**54**
2. Standard Liege	24	15	2	7	55	36	47
3. Ghent	24	14	1	9	58	44	43
4. Club Bruges	23	13	4	6	52	23	43
5. Genk	24	12	6	6	51	37	42
6. Lierse	24	12	5	7	48	31	41
7. Germinal	23	12	5	6	42	33	41
8. Excelsior	24	12	4	8	51	36	40
9. Westerlo	24	10	6	8	45	53	36
10. Mechelen	24	10	3	11	39	53	33
11. Eendracht Aalst	24	9	2	13	43	50	29
12. Lokeren	23	8	5	10	42	50	29
13. Harelbeke	24	8	4	12	48	48	28
14. Beveren	24	5	6	13	33	52	21
15. Charleroi	24	5	6	13	28	48	21
16. Sint-Truiden	24	5	4	15	24	52	19
17. Verbroedering	24	3	9	12	19	43	18
18. Lommel	24	1	10	13	22	50	13

LEADING SCORERS

20 - Ole-Martin Aarst (Ghent)

19 - Toni Brogno (Westerlo)

17 - David Paas (Harelbeke)

15 - Jan Koller (Anderlecht) Marcin Zewlakow (Excelsior Mouscron)

12 - Eric Van Meir (Lierse)

FRENCH LEAGUE CUP QTR-FINAL

Sedan 0 Red Star (III) 1, Paris St Germain 3 Nancy 0, Gueugnon (II) 2 Racing Strasbourg 0, Olympique Lyon 0 Bastia 1.

PORTUGUESE PREMIER LEAGUE

Uniao Leiria 3 Alverca 0, Maritimo 2 Estrela Amadora 2, Salgueiros 1 Vitoria Setubal 0, Benfica 6 Farense 2, Campomaiorense 1 Porto 0, Sporting Lisbon 1 Gil Vicente 1, Santa Clara 1 Rio Ave 0, Belenenses 0 Braga 3.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Porto	**22**	**14**	**6**	**2**	**44**	**12**	**48**
2. Sporting Lisbon	22	14	6	2	38	18	48
3. Benfica	22	14	5	3	35	16	47
4. Vitoria Guimaraes	21	11	4	6	33	22	37
5. Boavista	21	10	4	7	22	17	34
6. Maritimo	22	9	7	6	25	18	34
7. Gil Vicente	22	8	7	7	26	23	31
8. Belenenses	22	6	11	5	24	21	29
9. Estrela Amadora	22	6	10	6	23	23	28
10. Braga	22	8	3	11	29	30	27
11 Alverca	22	7	5	10	23	31	26
12. Salgueiros	22	7	4	11	17	26	25
13. Campomaiorense	22	6	5	11	19	31	23
14 Uniao Leiria	22	5	8	9	21	25	23
15. Rio Ave	22	5	7	10	24	33	22
16. Farense	22	4	8	10	18	43	20
17. Santa Clara	22	4	8	10	22	31	20
18 Vitoria Setubal	22	3	4	15	15	38	13

CROATIAN PREMIER LEAGUE

Zagreb 0 Hajduk 3, Osijek 1 Cibalia 1, Slaven Belupo 0 Hrv. Dragovoljac 1, Vukovar 91 0 Dinamo 0, Istra 0 Varteks 2, Rijeka 3 Sibenik 1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Hajduk	**17**	**13**	**3**	**1**	**44**	**15**	**42**
2. Dinamo	17	12	4	1	46	12	40
3. Osijek	17	9	3	5	30	25	30
4. Rijeka	17	8	3	6	34	22	27
5. Cibalia	17	5	7	5	22	20	22
6. Zagreb	17	5	7	5	19	22	22
7. Varteks	17	6	3	8	20	28	21
8. Slaven Belupo	17	4	8	5	16	21	20
9. Vukovar 91	17	3	6	8	14	26	15
10. Hrv. Dragovoljac	17	3	5	9	18	37	14
11. Sibenik	17	2	7	8	13	29	13
12. Istra	17	2	4	11	16	35	10

YUGOSLAV CHAMPIONSHIP

Partizan Belgrade 4 Hajduk Belgrade 2, Sutjeska Niksic 3 Proleter Zrenjanin 1, Radnicki Nis 2 Vojvodina Novi Sad 1, Spartak Subotica 1 Hajduk Kula 3, Radnicki Kragujevac 0 Obilic Belgrade 0, OFK Beograd Belgrade 3 Mogren Budva 1, Rad Belgrade 0 Sartid Smederevo 1, Buducnost Podgorica 2 Milicionar Belgrade 1, Zemun Belgrade 2 Borac Cacak 1, Zeleznik Belgrade 1 Red Star Belgrade 3.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Obilic Belgrade	**23**	**18**	**4**	**1**	**44**	**16**	**58**
2. Partizan Belgrade	22	18	3	1	55	19	57
3. Red Star Bel	22	16	5	1	52	14	53
4. Milicionar Bel	23	10	5	8	36	29	35
5. OFK Beograd Bel	23	9	7	7	35	34	34
6. Rad Belgrade	23	9	6	8	35	30	33
7. Buducnost	22	10	3	9	29	25	33
8. Radnicki	23	9	6	8	22	26	33
9. Sutjeska Niksic	23	9	5	9	31	36	32
10. Zeleznik Bel	23	8	6	9	29	28	30
11. Radnicki Nis	23	9	3	11	30	31	30
12. Vojvodina Novi	23	9	2	12	33	32	29
13. Zemun Belgrade	23	8	5	10	28	38	29
14. Proleter Zrenjanin	23	6	9	8	21	26	27
15. Cukaricki Belgrade	21	7	5	9	21	26	26
16. Hajduk Belgrade	23	8	2	13	37	44	26
17. Hajduk Kula	23	7	5	11	18	25	26
18. Sartid Smederevo	23	6	5	12	21	29	23
19. Mogren Budva	23	6	4	13	21	42	22
20. Spartak Subotica	23	4	5	14	16	43	17
21. Borac Cacak	23	4	3	16	28	52	15

LEADING SCORERS

14 - Bogic Popovic (Hajduk Belgrade)

13 - Sasa Ilic (Partizan Belgrade)

12 - Mateja Kezman (Partizan), Mihajlo Pjanovic (Red Star Belgrade)

11 - Milan Radojicic (Milicionar Belgrade)

10 - Branko Jelic (Red Star), Malesija Vojvoda (Radnicki Nis), Gabrijel Radojicic (Obilic Belgrade), Nemanja Dancetovic (Milicionar).

GREEK FIRST DIVISION

PAOK Thessaloniki 1 Panathinaikos 3, OFI Heraklion 2 Panachaiki Patras 2, AEK Athens 2 Ethnikos Astir Athens 1, Aris Thessaloniki 2 Proodeftiki Piraeus 1, Ionikos Piraeus 2 Panionios Athens 0, Kavala 2 Paniliakos Pyrgos 1, Olympiakos Piraeus 2 Apollon Athens 0.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Olympiakos	**20**	**18**	**0**	**2**	**55**	**14**	**54**
2. Panathinaikos	20	17	2	1	52	14	53
3. OFI Heraklion	20	13	5	2	37	23	44
4. AEK Athens	20	10	4	6	36	24	34
5. Iraklis Thessaloniki	19	10	2	7	33	27	32
6. Aris Thessaloniki	20	9	5	6	28	21	32
7. PAOK Thessaloniki	20	7	7	6	31	27	28
8. Paniliakos Pyrgos	20	8	4	8	27	22	28
9. Panionios Athens	20	9	1	10	30	39	28
10. Xanthi	19	6	7	6	20	22	25
11. Ethnikos Astir	20	7	2	11	18	28	23
12. Ionikos Piraeus	20	4	10	6	20	25	22
13. Kavala	20	5	4	11	21	34	19
14. Panachaiki Patras	20	4	6	10	19	29	18
15. Kalamata	19	3	6	10	19	39	15
16. Proodeftiki Piraeus	20	3	5	12	13	31	14
17. Apollon Athens	20	3	5	12	14	30	14
18. Trikala	19	3	3	13	13	36	12

ISRAELI FIRST DIVISION

Betar Jerusalem 2 Hapoel Tel Aviv 0, Hapoel Petah Tikva 2 Hapoel Kfar Sava 1, Ironi Rishon Lezion 1 Bnei Yehuda 0, Hapoel Haifa 0 Maccabi Haifa 0, Maccabi Tel Aviv 1 Hapoel Jerusalem 1, Ashdod SC 0 Maccabi Herzliya 1, Maccabi Netanya 0 Maccabi Petah Tikva 1.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Hapoel Tel Aviv	**25**	**18**	**3**	**4**	**54**	**18**	**57**
2. Maccabi Haifa	25	16	7	2	55	19	55
3. Hapoel Petah Tikva	25	16	3	6	41	26	51
4. Betar Jerusalem	25	12	8	5	44	33	44
5. Hapoel Haifa	25	11	10	4	39	21	43
6. Maccabi Petah	24	12	4	8	32	30	40
7. Ashdod SC	25	8	8	9	31	31	32
8. Maccabi Tel Aviv	25	9	6	10	31	24	29
9. Ironi Rishon	25	5	9	11	23	44	24
10. Bnei Yehuda	25	5	8	12	21	40	23
11. Hapoel Kfar Sava	25	5	7	13	28	44	22
12. Maccabi Netanya	25	5	5	15	29	48	20
13. Maccabi Herzliya	25	5	5	15	22	48	20
14. Hapoel Jerusalem	24	4	3	17	19	43	15

AFRICAN OLYMPIC QUALIFIERS

GROUP A: Uganda 2 Nigeria 3.

	P	W	D	F	L	A	Pts
1. Zimbabwe	**3**	**3**	**0**	**0**	**8**	**3**	**9**
2. Nigeria	3	2	0	1	6	4	6
3. Angola	3	1	0	2	5	6	3
4. Uganda	3	0	0	3	3	9	0

GROUP B: Ghana 2 Guinea 0, South Africa 2 Cameroon 0.

	P	W	D	F	L	A	Pts
1. South Africa	**3**	**2**	**1**	**0**	**7**	**3**	**7**
2. Cameroon	3	2	0	1	5	3	6
3. Ghana	3	1	1	1	5	4	4
4. Guinea	3	0	0	3	1	8	0

GROUP C: Ivory Coast 3 Egypt 3, Tunisia 2 Morocco 4.

	P	W	D	F	L	A	Pts
1. Morocco	**3**	**2**	**0**	**1**	**6**	**6**	**6**
2. Ivory Coast	3	1	2	0	8	5	5
3. Egypt	3	1	1	1	5	5	4
4. Tunisia	3	0	1	2	4	7	1

NATIONAL LEAGUE

	Total							Home						Away					
	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS	P	W	D	L	F	A	P	W	D	L	F	A
SYDNEY OLYMPIC	22	12	5	5	43	24	41	10	5	4	1	26	12	12	7	1	4	17	12
NEWCASTLE BREAKERS	22	11	6	5	32	27	39	11	6	4	1	22	15	11	5	2	4	10	12
PERTH GLORY	21	10	7	4	38	27	37	10	6	3	1	23	12	11	4	4	3	15	15
WOLLONGONG WOLVES	22	10	7	5	43	33	37	11	7	1	3	21	15	11	3	6	2	22	18
MARCONI STALLIONS	21	10	5	6	30	25	35	10	6	1	3	14	11	11	4	4	3	16	14
CARLTON SC	21	9	6	6	35	26	33	11	5	4	2	17	10	10	4	2	4	18	16
BRISBANE STRIKERS	22	9	5	8	31	26	32	11	5	4	2	21	10	11	4	1	6	10	16
AUCKLAND KINGZ	20	8	5	7	35	33	29	10	4	3	3	18	17	10	4	2	4	17	16
SOUTH MELBOURNE	21	8	5	8	32	34	29	10	6	2	2	21	10	11	2	3	6	11	24
PARRAMATTA POWER	20	8	3	9	35	32	27	11	5	3	3	20	14	9	3	0	6	15	18
NORTHERN SPIRIT	22	8	3	11	26	35	27	11	5	2	4	14	15	11	3	1	7	12	20
ADELAIDE CITY FORCE	22	6	7	9	27	26	25	12	5	4	3	21	14	10	1	3	6	6	12
GIPPSLAND FALCONS	22	6	6	10	15	26	24	11	3	2	6	8	12	11	3	4	4	7	14
MELBOURNE KNIGHTS	22	6	6	10	25	38	24	11	5	2	4	13	10	11	1	4	6	12	28
CANBERRA COSMOS	22	5	6	11	27	41	21	11	3	3	5	13	13	11	2	3	6	14	28
SYDNEY UNITED	22	3	4	15	13	34	13	12	3	2	7	10	17	10	0	2	8	3	17

ADELAIDE CITY FORCE 1
(Mori 75pen)
PERTH GLORY 2
(Boutsianis 1, Edwards 19)

Venue: Hindmarsh Stadium. **Crowd:** 6,300. **Referee:** S Micallef.
Cautions: Pelosi (AC) 51, Edwards (PG) 69, Boutsianis (PG) 75.
Teams: Adelaide City: Knezevic, Hornjik (Hassell 33), Tobin, Talladira (Zelic 89), Mori, Sabljak, Vidmar, Kemp, Costanzo, Pelosi (Brain 61), Kim.
Perth Glory: J. Petkovic, Trajkovski, Miller (Afkos 40), Naven, Thorp, Valle, Halpin, Junior, Edwards, Schwertz (Ergic 80), Boutsianis (Buljan 83).

CANBERRA COSMOS 1
(Arranz 2)
PARRAMATTA POWER 0

Venue: Bruce Stadium. **Crowd:** 2,251. **Referee:** P Mur.
Cautions: Plesa (PP) 25, Burns (PP) 51.
Teams: Canberra Cosmos: Barlow, Popovich, Burt (Milin 65), Polak, Arranz, Hamilton, James, Hooker, Clark, Roberts, De Jesus.
Parramatta Power: Gibson, Barratt, Santalab (Eagleton 45), Plesa (Elrich 72), Burns, Sterjovski, Griffiths (Kukucka 45), Berry, Byrnes, Gibson, Bennett.

GIPPSLAND FALCONS 0
SOUTH MELBOURNE 1
(Curcija 88)

Venue: Falcons Park. **Crowd:** 3,450. **Referee:** M. Shield.
Cautions: Robertson (GF) 13, Goutzoulis (SM) 18, Vargas (GF) 45, Anastasiadis (SM) 50, Vlahos (SM) 90.
Teams: Gippsland Falcons: Jevdjevic, Gotis, MacNicol Durakovic, Vargas (Nilo 81), Puca (Katz 78), Robertson, Hutchinson, Savage, Marcina, Mandic.
South Melbourne: Jones, De Amicis (Alagich 68), Orlic, Panopoulos, Trimboli, Curcija, Anastasiadis (Coveny 61), Lozanovski, Goutzoulis (Clarkson 61).

MARCONI STALLIONS 2
(McDonald 67, Karl 80)
SYDNEY UNITED 0

Venue: Marconi Stadium. **Crowd:** 6,120. **Referee:** G Connolly.
Cautions: Savoca (SU) 54.
Red Card: Genc (SU) 74.
Teams: Marconi Stallions: Aceski, Gibson, Babic, Longo, Smith (Renaud 88), Invincible, Farah, Di Gia (McDonald 17), Duric (Karl 79), Trajanovski, Zoric.
Sydney United: Tolios, Genc, Moric (Rakic 51), Savoca, Jurilj, Palapanis, Arrarte, Moric (Jerman 72), Maric, Pondeljak, Usljebrka (Younis 66).

NORTHERN SPIRIT 1
(Bilokapic 57)
BRISBANE STRIKERS 0

Venue: North Sydney Oval **Crowd:** 10,438. **Referee:** E Lennie.
Cautions: Duke (BS) 82.
Teams: Northern Spirit: Henderson, Moss, Wearne, Cunico, Bilokapic, Cranney, Griffiths, Berti (T. Cranney 62), Langdon (Sobczyk 83), Slater, Saad (Cantanzaro 71).
Brisbane Strikers: Duke, McClaren, Battistin, Ditton (Davidson 71), Srhoj, North, Grierson, Meredith, Bell, Baldwin (Pilic 78), Dwyer.

AUCKLAND KINGZ 0
NEWCASTLE BREAKERS 1
(Wilson 67)

Venue: Westpac Trust Stadium. **Crowd:** 8,023. **Referee:** J Blaney.
Cautions: Bunce (AK) 30, Wilson (NB) 72.
Teams: Auckland Kingz: Utting, Bunce (Rufer 77), Vicelich, Stergiopoulos (Suri 45), Van Steeden, Osman, Perry, De Jong, Silva (Elrick 45), Ngata, Jackson.
Newcastle Breakers: Catlin, Pryce, McManus, Sprod, Dodd, Wilson, Buonavoglia, Wieczorek (Roberts 77), Owens, Harper, Moore (Trpcevski 16, Tancheski 82).

MELBOURNE KNIGHTS 3
(Silic 10, Kiratzoglou 23, Cervinski 88)
CARLTON SC 0

Venue: Knights Stadium. **Crowd:** 6,211. **Referee:** B Hugo.
Cautions: Silic (MK) 14, Marth (C) 19, 27, Horvat (C) 22, Kiratzoglou (MK) 22, Thompson 28 (C) 28, Kelic (MK) 73.
Red Card: Marth (C) 27.
Teams: Melbourne Knights: John, Kovacevic, Rajher (Rados 90), Silic (Vargas 90), Kelic, Abbas, Kiratzoglou, Magdic, Reda (Urlovic 74), Cervinski, Banini.
Carlton SC: Anastasiadis, McPherson, Marth, Slater, Moreira (Vasilevski 58), Thompson, Martin (Deans 83), Anthopoulos, Terminello, Horvat, Kennedy (Markovski 74).

WOLLONGONG WOLVES 1
(Mennillo 33)
SYDNEY OLYMPIC 1
(Arambasic 51)

Venue: Brandon Park. **Crowd:** 7,351. **Referee:** M Breeze.
Cautions: Mennillo (WW) 23, Thomas (SO) 68, Chipperfield (WW) 74, Wilson (SO) 75, Horsley (WW) 89.
Teams: Wollongong Wolves: Pogliacomi, Souris, Ceccoli (Huxley 55), Stanton, Cervinski, Horsley, Reid, Young (Masi 65), Chipperfield, Petrovski (Blake 85), Mennillo.
Sydney Olympic: Bouhoutsos, Thomas, Zoricich, Baillie, Juric, Cardozo, Emerton, Mendez (Sinozic 73), Wilson, Zorbas (Carle 45), Arambasic (Kalantzis 64).

LEADING GOALSCORERS

P Cardozo	(Sydney Olympic)	13
M Curcija	(South Melbourne)	13
C Boutsianis	(Perth Glory)	12
P Foster	(Brisbane Strikers)	11
A Moreira	(Carlton SC)	11
J Buonavoglia	(Newcastle Breakers)	10
J Griffiths	(Parramatta Power)	9
A Marth	(Carlton SC)	9
E Masi	(Wollongong Wolves)	9
D Mori	(Adelaide City Force)	9
S Petrovski	(Wollongong Wolves)	9
S Chipperfield	(Wollongong Wolves)	8
I Kelic	(Melbourne Knights)	8
S Young	(Wollongong Wolves)	8

ABSW PLAYER OF THE YEAR
(PROGRESSIVE POINTS)
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ROUND TWENTY THREE

Friday 25 February: Parramatta Power v Brisbane Strikers Parramatta Stadium 7.30pm, ***Newcastle Breakers v Gippsland Falcons Breakers Stadium 7.30pm.***
Saturday 26 February: Carlton SC v Adelaide City Force Olympic Park 7pm.
Sunday 27 February: ***Wollongong Wolves v Auckland Kingz Brandon Park 6pm,*** Perth Glory v Canberra Cosmos Perth Oval 4pm, ***South Melbourne v Marconi Stallions Bob Jane Stadium 5pm,*** Sydney Olympic v Northern Spirit Belmore Sports Ground 6.30pm, ***Sydney United v Melbourne Knights Sydney United SG 6pm.***

(All times provided are local times)